

CHANGE IN A LOOSELY COUPLED ORGANIZATION – TWO CASE STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

The approach used by university leaders to advance institutional change effects the early reactions to the proposed change by faculty, students, staff and alumni.

This paper explores the early stages of two significant changes at Cornell University to determine how leaders advanced the changes, and considers the impact of the approaches on campus reactions through the lens of research conducted by Larry Hirschhorn (1994). Hirschhorn advises leaders to advance change in ways that align with the loosely coupled nature of the organization. Cornell recently created a new applied science campus, Cornell Tech, in New York City and established a new Cornell College of Business on the Ithaca, NY campus. The leaders who advanced these changes did so using different change strategies.

Based upon the research of Karl Weick (1976) and Larry Hirschhorn (1994) on loosely coupled organizations, Cornell functions consistent with the definition of a loosely coupled organization (Weick 1976). Larry Hirschhorn (1994) developed guidance to leaders about how to effectively advance change in a loosely coupled organization. He advised leaders to make changes in consideration of the following:

- Align change plans with characteristics of the university and acknowledge the semi-autonomous status of units of the university
- Protect the system by keeping it within its safety zone and managing its contradictions, and guide the system by developing strategic themes and building a planning framework

- Make change “at the seams” between units of the university and boost synergistic combinations. (1994, p.2)

The two change actions are considered relative to this guidance. This analysis indicates that the leaders who more closely adhered to Hirschhorn’s (1994) advice received more early support for their proposal from campus constituents than did the leaders who did not follow his guidance.

To explore the two changes, detailed timelines of the early stages of each change were developed using publicly available information. Information in these timelines informed analyses of the approaches used by university leaders and the reaction of campus constituents to the early stage actions. The impact of leadership actions on the reactions of faculty, staff, students, and alumni are based on the change tenets developed by Larry Hirschhorn (1994) for leaders of loosely coupled organizations.

While neither change fully followed the guidance of the Larry Hirschhorn (1994), the leaders of the effort to create Cornell Tech were more considerate of the semi-autonomous nature of the various colleges and units of Cornell. They engaged faculty in developing the organizational design of the new campus and in establishing new academic programs. The new campus was created “at the seams” (Hirschhorn, 1994, p.5) of existing colleges and academic programs, leveraging new opportunities to collaborate and create new synergies.

The leaders who advanced the establishment of the Cornell College of Business chose an approach that delayed involvement of campus constituents and provided the campus community little notice of the planned change. Their plan was to involve faculty, alumni and others after the decision to create the college was made by the board of trustees. The new college was not created “at the seams” (Hirschhorn, 1994, p. 5) of existing schools and units – it changed the seams themselves. The goal of the new college is to create new collaborations and synergies between the three schools.

Both changes – the creation of Cornell Tech and the establishment of the Cornell College of Business are currently in their early stages. Both changes may be considered successful once they are fully implemented. The change strategy used by the leaders who advanced Cornell Tech were more considerate of the university’s loosely coupled nature than was the strategy used by the leaders who pursued the establishment of the Cornell College of Business and this impacted how the change plans were received and responded to by campus constituents. Cornell Tech, a change made “at the seams” of existing colleges and units, garnered early support from faculty, students and alumni. The establishment of the Cornell College of Business, which changed the semi-autonomous nature of three schools and was not made “at their seams”, resulted in resistance by many campus community members.

Leaders who respect the existing characteristics of the loosely coupled organization, create planning frameworks that involve key constituents and focus change “at the

seams” between the semi-autonomous units of the organization may be more likely to garner campus support in the early stages of advancing a proposed change.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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INTRODUCTION

The approach used by university leaders to advance institutional change effects the early reactions to the proposed change by faculty, students, staff and alumni.

This paper explores the early stages of two significant changes at Cornell University to determine how leaders advanced the changes, and considers the impact of the approaches on campus reactions, through the lens of research conducted by Larry Hirschhorn. Hirschhorn (1994) advises leaders to advance change in ways that align with the loosely coupled nature of the organization. Cornell recently created a new applied science campus, Cornell Tech, in New York City and established a new Cornell College of Business on the Ithaca, NY campus. The leaders who advanced these changes did so using different change strategies.

Universities are facing increased scrutiny, from public officials and the general public, about the cost of attendance and the value of a higher education in relation to that cost. University trustees are pressuring leaders to make changes that will increase efficiency and respond to the changing expectations of the country. Institutions of higher education are considered slow to change their structures and programs. (Ehrenberg 2002, p. 6). University leaders are looking for both cost savings and new sources of revenue. These efforts have led to many changes including growth in student enrollment, increased fund raising efforts, shifts in academic programming, and changes to administrative operations. How leaders introduce these changes into the

organization, particularly in decentralized universities, may affect how faculty, students, staff and alumni react to the proposals.

This paper explores two significant changes and the processes used by university leaders to introduce them at Cornell University. Cornell is a loosely coupled organization in which the colleges and units operate with significant autonomy and limited interdependencies (Weick 1976, p. 3). Larry Hirschhorn researched loosely coupled organizations and the role leaders play in advancing changes within them. He developed strategies for leaders and recommended that they focus change efforts “at the seams” of its “semi-autonomous” units (1994, p.4). This paper will consider the early stages of two changes made at Cornell University to determine if leaders made them in consideration of the loosely coupled nature of the university. It will also explore if the changes were made “at the seams” between the university’s colleges/units and whether parties involved or interested in the changes responded differently when the change was made considerate of Hirschhorn’s guidance to leaders.

A detailed timeline of the early stages of each change – creation of Cornell Tech and the establishment of the Cornell College of Business - outlines the actions of university leaders and the reactions of the campus community to those actions. The two timelines were developed from publicly available information. Based on information in the timelines and other publicly available information, the paper presents observations of the early development phases of these changes by exploring whether the changes addressed the following aspects of Hirschhorn’s recommendations:

- Align change plans with characteristics of the university and acknowledge the semi-autonomous status of units of the university
- Protect the system by keeping it within its safety zone and managing its contradictions and guide the system by developing strategic themes and building a planning framework
- Make change “at the seams” between units of the university and boost synergistic combinations. (1994, p.2)

The actions of university leaders to create Cornell Tech more closely aligned with the guidance of researcher Larry Hirschhorn than did the actions of the university leaders that established the Cornell College of Business. Faculty, students, alumni, and staff reacted more favorably to the plan to create Cornell Tech, in part because of the change strategy employed by university leaders. Other factors may have impacted these reactions and some of these additional factors are identified. After analyzing both cases, several key findings and considerations are identified.

Loosely Coupled Systems and leading “at the seams”

In “Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems” Karl Weick wrote that loosely coupled variables or “events” are responsive to one another while “each event also preserves its own identity and some evidence of its own physical or logical separateness” (1976, p.3). In a higher educational institution, the connections between variables may include faculty to their students or to one another, faculty to the materials

from which they teach, alumni to their alma mater, administrators to the board of trustees. Variables that are connected, or coupled together, form systems.

A higher education institution may have more than one system within it, particularly in large, decentralized universities. At a minimum, a university is likely to include the more loosely coupled academic system of the faculty and students and the more tightly coupled, authority driven system of the administrators and Board of Trustees. The extent to which systems within the organization are connected to one another depends upon on how frequently aspects of these systems connect or couple (Weick, 1976, p. 3). An important illustration of cross system integration occurs when the faculty of a university regularly interact with the administrative system that includes the president and board of trustees. Regular communications are likely to create tighter connections between these two systems.

Larry Hirschhorn describes loosely coupled systems as “settings where individual elements have high autonomy relative to the larger system that they are in, often having a federated character” (1994, p.1). Hirschhorn identifies the risk that changes in one part of the system may “unpredictably trigger responses out of proportion” in another part of the system because the “linkages among elements are often unpredictable, ill understood and/or uneven”. He suggests that, in loosely coupled systems, “the forces for integration—for worrying about the whole, its identity, its integrity and its future—are often weak compared to the forces for specialization” (1994, p. 1).

The loosely coupled academic system in universities focus primarily on faculty/student, and faculty/faculty connections. They are less focused on issues that impact the university as a whole, while those in the administrative system, including the president and the trustees, are concerned about issues such as the university finances and reputation. Hirschhorn advises these leaders:

Leaders of loosely coupled or federated systems can plan for their future, but the plans they develop, the frameworks they use, the planning processes they deploy, must all fit the characteristics of the institution they lead. Recent experience suggests that planning consists of both protecting and guiding the system while acknowledging the semi-autonomous status of its component units. To protect the system, the executive keeps the system within its safety zone and manages its contradictions; to guide the system the executive develops strategic themes, builds a planning infrastructure and works at the “seams” between units, giving a boost to emerging synergistic combinations (1994, p. 2).

Hirschhorn believes that university leaders have the responsibility to protect the organization from its own contradictions and to keep the organization intact, giving local leaders significant authority while avoiding “excessive balkanization” (1994, p.2). He views the role of guiding the university through change as less about controlling and more about developing strategic themes to advance change concepts that are shared broadly. Hirschhorn encourages leaders to share basic financial information, hold open forums, establish a steering committee and seek acceptance of global strategic themes (1994, p.3).

Hirschhorn (1994) advises that leaders in a loosely coupled academic environment have some opportunity to influence growth “at the seams” between the semi-autonomous units of a loosely coupled organization because no one unit sees the

space between the unit as solely theirs to govern. He believes that complex systems can develop by growing in size, creating more specialized parts, and by combining old parts to create new ones.

However, Hirschhorn warns leaders that if the wrong issue is chosen, the “people will participate in the collaborative projects he/she sponsors only ritualistically. Consequently, the cross-unit collaboration will not produce new resources” (1994, p. 3).

Weick suggests that regular interaction between systems impact the connectivity of the systems. The interactions that occur between the systems – crossing over from the more loosely coupled academic system to the more tightly coupled administrative system are particularly important during times of change (1976, p.3).

Cornell University, a large decentralized research university, is comprised of several colleges, offering both graduate and undergraduate degrees. In addition, faculty advance research in a multitude of disciplines, sometimes in distinct centers and institutes. Faculty identify with their academic disciplines and with academic colleagues in their department and departments with which they collaborate. Students and alumni tend to be loyal to the college from which they graduate. The university serves somewhat as a holding company for colleges, centers and institutes and while there is a loyalty to the “brand” of the institution, each college tends to operate with significant autonomy and without much motivation to affiliate strongly with one another other than through opportunistic academic collaborations. This represents the loose coupling of

the various academic units of the university. University leaders, in contrast, oversee the entire institution and are responsible for advancing changes that address institutional issues or needs. Their challenge is to make university-wide changes in a loosely coupled organization where there is little interconnectivity or interdependence between its parts. Hirschhorn (1994) suggests a change strategy that calls upon institutional leaders to involve faculty and others in considering changes that begin as strategic themes and through active engagement are developed into more concrete plans. Advancing change opportunities “at the seams” between the academic units consistent with Hirschhorn’s guidance presents leaders with an avenue to grow the university without deleterious disruption of activities within the units.

Hirschhorn (1994) advises institutional leaders to identify opportunities for change that exists “at the seams” between organizational elements. This paper explores the extent to which two change at Cornell University were proposed and implemented consistent with Hirschhorn’s guidance to leaders, whether the changes were made “at the seams” between its colleges/units and whether adhering to Hirschhorn’s guidance impacted reactions by the campus community.

CHAPTER 1

CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Overview

Cornell University is a loosely coupled organization that includes numerous “systems” including the academic elements of the organization and its administrative systems.

A faculty member at Cornell University once shared her view that the university could meet its scholarship mission without any administrative infrastructure. She opined that even if disaster struck, Cornell could continue as long as the faculty and the students could meet together “on a hill” to advance learning. This view of the teaching mission identifies the faculty/student connection and the relative independence of the faculty/student connections within academic systems from the administrative systems of the university. Within the academic systems of the university include coupling relationships between the faculty and the student, faculty to faculty, and researcher to their research collaborators. These are important elements of coupling and most are loose and independent of one another.

The academic activities of one faculty member, or even one academic department, may or may not connect with that of another. Collaborations are academically opportunistic and may occur within Cornell or with academic peers at other universities. The teaching strategies advanced by one professor may be of interest to another professor, but other faculty are not obligated to adopt them. Research focus areas are the domain of each scholar, though many work in collaboration with others. This relative independence of

one element of the system from another is descriptive of a loosely define organization. One college may add or close a department but this change will likely have little impact on other colleges. On the other hand, there may be unpredictable responses to these decisions because in a loosely coupled organization “linkages among elements are often unpredictable, ill understood and/or uneven.” (Hirschhorn, 1994, p. 3).

In loosely coupled systems, the forces for integration—for worrying about the whole, its identity, its integrity and its future—are often weak compared to the forces for specialization (Hirschhorn, 1994, p. 1). This aspect of loosely coupled systems is relevant when considering the two recent changes – the creation of Cornell Tech on Roosevelt Island in New York City and the establishment of the Cornell College of Business. Adding a new campus, or combining schools into a single college may be in the best interest of the university. However, when considered from the perspective of a loosely coupled organization, it is less clear as to whether these changes create advantages for different elements of the system. When changes are made “at the seams” of the units of the loosely coupled organization, the design must be such that those within the units whose “seams” are near the change feel ownership over the new opportunity (Hirschhorn, 1994, p. 3).

At its academic core, Cornell’s loose coupling is an enabling factor for some of its most important scholarly advancements. Administratively, the university operates more tightly to manage financial resources, adhere to regulations, policies and procedures.

The administrative system of the university includes the roles of the administrative leaders from the board of trustees and president and the administrative leaders reporting to them who oversee technical systems, legal and regulatory compliance, policies and procedures, operational management, financial decision-making.

There is a tension between the desire of academics and scholars to co-exist in loose, transient couplings and increasing pressure from the general public, public officials and university trustees to attenuate the cost of attendance. The systems within which the academics teach and research more closely resemble loosely coupled systems. The system in which the board of trustees, president, vice presidents and deans derive their authority through formal delegation is more formal and less likely to fit Weick's (1976) and Hirschhorn's (1994) definitions of a loosely coupled system, although they are part of a loosely coupled organization.

Cornell has a shared-governance assembly representing every constituency on campus: students, graduate students, faculty, staff and an umbrella organization called the University Assembly. Students, faculty and staff all have voting seats on the Board of Trustees. The understanding is that these assemblies will have a role in the governance of the university. During times of change, the members of these assemblies are in the position between their constituents who may not support proposed university-wide changes and the university leaders who serve as their institutional partners. The shared governance system serves as an interlocutor between a loosely coupled system and a more tightly coupled system.

While the shared governance mechanisms are intended to give voice to faculty, staff and students, they alone may not be sufficient to create ongoing connections between the loosely coupled system that includes the faculty, researchers and students, and the more tightly coupled administrative system of the university.

Organizational Structure

The university's operating budget is approximately 4 billion dollars. It employs over 15,000 faculty and staff and educates over 20,000 students. It is one of the top funded research universities in the country. Cornell is New York State's land grant university. It is a complex organization that encompasses both the loosely coupled academic systems of the colleges and the more tightly coupled administrative systems that operate the university (About Cornell, 2016).

Administratively, the university operates through a hierarchical structure, from the Board of Trustees (BOT), which "shall have supreme control over the University" (Cornell University Bylaws, 2016, Article I). The BOT has delegated significant responsibilities to the president, charging the president with "responsibility for providing general supervision to all affairs of the University" (Cornell University Bylaws, 2016, Article V). The Bylaws also give the president the authority to "define the duties of all officers and other members of the staff whose duties are not prescribed by the Bylaws or by action of the Board of Trustees" (Cornell University Bylaws, 2016, Article V). The president has delegated authority to the provosts who serve as the campus's chief operating officers.

In this capacity the provosts (the university provost and the provost for medical affairs) “shall be the chief educational officer with responsibility for oversight of all academic programs, and the chief operating officer with responsibility for providing general supervision of all units of the University” (Cornell University Bylaws, 2016, Article VII). University counsel, university audit, executive vice president and chief finance officer, investment office, government and community relations, and technology transfer are university-wide functions, with authority to oversee and determine actions on all campuses of Cornell.

The provosts report directly to the president, as do several vice presidents and the university counsel. The university provost has several vice provosts, all college deans and the librarian reporting to him. The vice president for planning and budget and chief information officer report dually to the provost and the executive vice president and chief financial officer. The dean/vice provost for Cornell Tech reports to the university provost. The provost for medical affairs has several direct reports, in addition to all department chairs (Leadership, 2016).

Both provosts have the delegated responsibility to serve as “chief educational officer with responsibility for oversight of all academic programs” (Cornell University Bylaws, 2016, Article VII). At Weill Cornell Medicine (WCM), the provost has direct oversight over all units, thereby discharging responsibilities to serve as “chief operating officer with responsibility for providing general supervision of all units of the University” (Cornell University Bylaws, 2016, Article VII). On the Ithaca campus the provost provides

“general supervision” to those areas that report to him. The other administrative operations report to the president directly.

The role of the university faculty “shall be to consider questions of educational policy which concern more than one college, school or separate academic unit, or are general in nature; and to recommend to the Board of Trustees, with the approval of the appropriate college or school faculty, the establishment, modification or discontinuance of degrees” (Cornell University Bylaws, 2016, Article XIII).

Ithaca Structure

At each college or school at Ithaca, except the Graduate School, “it shall be the duty of each separate college or school faculty to determine the entrance requirements for its own students; to prescribe and define courses of study for them; to determine the requirements for such degrees as are offered to students under its jurisdiction; to recommend to the President such candidates for degrees as may have fulfilled the requirements therefore; to enact and enforce rules for the guidance and supervision of its students in their academic work; and in general to exercise jurisdiction over the academic interests of students and all other educational matters in the particular college or school” (Cornell University Bylaws, 2016, Article XIV).

In Ithaca, college deans operate with significant latitude, under the direction of the University Provost. They are required to adhere to all university controls, however, the provost has delegated many operational decisions to the deans. The areas of required

adherence to university policies and approvals include: legal, audit, capital expenditure approval, financial controls and budget approval processes, and risk management.

While most academic units are based in Ithaca, some are not. The campus in Geneva, New York is the Agriculture Experiment Station, which operates under the direction of the Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (About Cornell 2016).

Cornell Cooperative Extension, which operates programs in every county of NYS, also operates under the direction of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. The College of Human Ecology and The School of Industrial and Labor Relations also run extension programs and both have a presence in NYC. There are a number of other programs that operate outside of Ithaca. Among them are the Cornell in Washington Program, Cornell in Rome Program and Cornell-Nanyang Institute of Hospitality Management (About Cornell 2016).

Administrative functions supporting the Ithaca campus are organized in a variety of ways, with reporting relationships either to the president or provost. Some areas (human resources, alumni affairs and development, facilities, communications, finance) employ a form of “matrix” management, with professionals based in the colleges reporting dually to the operational vice president and the college dean. Other Ithaca operations (audit, investment, budget, institutional planning, university counsel, environmental health and safety, police, government relations), are centralized under functional leaders housed on the Ithaca campus (Leadership 2016).

Research operations are overseen in Ithaca by a senior academic who leads the university's research institutes, compliance obligations and sponsored programs and reports to the university provost. Technology transfer is managed for the entire campus by this senior academic, who oversees offices at both Ithaca and WCM, and who, for this activity, reports directly to the president (Leadership 2016).

Weill Cornell Medicine Structure

The faculty of medicine “shall be composed as are the other college and school faculties under paragraph one of this Article. However, the duties of that Faculty shall be discharged ordinarily by an Executive Faculty Council consisting of the President, the Provost for Medical Affairs, the dean and the associate deans of the college, and the chairpersons of those departments of the college and such other persons as may be designated by the President; and by a General Faculty Council consisting of representatives elected by the various disciplines and constituent elements of the college as the Board of Trustees shall authorize and provide” (Cornell University Bylaws, 2016, Article XIV).

CHAPTER 2

CORNELL UNIVERSITY CASE STUDIES: INTRODUCTION

Recent changes at Cornell include the creation of a medical college in Qatar, and the creation of a new school of biomedical engineering. For the most part, these changes have occurred within one unit of the loosely coupled system – a single college of the university.

Two other changes at Cornell include the decision to develop a new applied science graduate college in New York City and the decision to consolidate all accredited business programs into the College of Business. These changes cross units of the academic system and are the subject of this paper.

The new applied science college – Cornell NYC Tech, or Cornell Tech as it became known - was created by a team that included two deans and the university provost who responded to a call for proposals by the city of New York. New York City Mayor Bloomberg was seeking a university to assist in the advancement of the tech sector in New York City as a way to diversify the economy of the city (NYC.gov, 2011). The university president and board of trustees endorsed and supported the university's response to the proposal by providing resources and publicly supporting the effort. Creating a new campus centered in New York City, regardless of the purpose of the venture, is a significant institutional change that resulted in some questioning of the university's commitment to its core mission in Ithaca. However, when viewed as a truly

entrepreneurial venture, it may be an example of how leaders of a loosely coupled system can advance innovation in consideration of Hirschhorn's (1994) guidance to leaders. The change involves more than one unit of the university and may have been made "at the seams" of these units. The case study that follows will consider this in more detail.

The second case study reviews the decision to combine the Johnson Graduate School of Management, the Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, and the School of Hotel Administration into the Cornell College of Business. The disparate nature of business offerings at Cornell had been considered in past years, with a report submitted by a small faculty committee in 2009 (Seeber et.al, 2009) and mention made of the issue in the 2010 Strategic Plan (SPAC, 2010). In December, 2015, with relatively little notice to the campus community, the president and provost announced the decision to seek board of trustee approval for the creation of a college of business in January 2016. There was little faculty or campus involvement prior to this announcement. The president and provost chose instead to seek involvement after the trustee's vote to establish the college occurred. This approach was quite different from the one used to establish Cornell Tech, and not does not appear to follow the guidance of Hirschhorn. The case study that follows will explore this in more detail.

CHAPTER 3

CORNELL NYC TECH CAMPUS

Timeline - Cornell NYC Tech Campus

I. Cornell responds to New York City's request for submissions of interest

On March 16, 2011 “Cornell submitted an expression of interest to create a new applied science and engineering research center and campus in New York City.” The request was sent out by the city of New York through the New York City Economic Development Corp on December 10, 2010. In a March 18th Cornell Chronicle article, Provost Kent Fuchs compares Cornell with the other 27 academic institutions that have submitted proposals, noting “In contrast to the other universities submitting proposals, Cornell is unique as a land grant university for the state of New York with a major presence in the city, and one of the world’s top universities in applied science and engineering” (‘Cornell expresses interest to NYC in creating a tech campus’, 2011).

II. Cornell reports that others have expressed interest in responding to New York City Economic Development Corporation's request for expressions of interest

On June 17, 2011, the Cornell Chronicle reports that, to date, there are “18 preliminary proposals from 27 academic institutions and companies planning to respond to a Request for Proposals for the project to be released by Mayor Michael Bloomberg in the summer.” President Skorton said “We firmly believe that Cornell’s combination of academic excellence in engineering and computing sciences, leadership position in the

technology industry, and strong existing presence in the city make us an ideal candidate, and that the competitive process will lead to a better outcome for New Yorkers”. The leaders of the initiative are President Skorton, Provost Fuchs, Dean of the College of Engineering Lance Collins, and Dean of Computing and Information Sciences, Dan Huttenlocher (‘Cornell proposes 'transformative' NYC campus’ 2011).

III. Cornell announces its intention to respond to Mayor Bloomberg’s request for proposals “to create a world-class applied science and engineering campus” in New York City

On July 19, 2011 in the Cornell Chronicle online, Cornell announces that the university will respond to New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s requests for proposals to create an applied science and engineering campus in New York City. The president said “By bringing together Cornell’s expertise in applied sciences and leadership in technology transfer and commercialization, with our long history of graduating successful entrepreneurs, we are poised to build a true 21st century campus that will train tomorrow’s tech leaders and drive New York City’s emerging tech economy.”

According to article, Cornell will submit a proposal that “will draw on Cornell's strong research pedigree and its deep roots in New York to marry the city's global leadership in media, finance, medicine, design and other information-intensive industries to a broad array of world-leading scientific and engineering innovations and dramatically expand the unique tech ecosystem in New York City.” The request for proposals was released by New York City on July 19, 2011, responses are due back this fall and Mayor

“Bloomberg is expected to announce the winner in December” (‘Cornell to answer NYC's call for world-class applied science campus plan’, 2011).

IV. Provost Kent Fuchs, Dean of the College of Computing and Information Sciences Dan Huttenlocher, and Dean of the College of Engineering Lance Collins are interviewed in the July 2011 issue of [Ezra Update, A Monthly Newsletter for Alumni and Friends](#)

The provost and deans answered questions about “why Cornell is the right choice for developing a New York City technology campus”. They focused on the strength of Cornell’s existing presence in New York City and the number of alumni in New York City, as well as the number of alumni in the technology industry. The provost pointed to the university’s experience starting the medical college in Qatar when asked about the university’s experience in “developing and running a remote campus”. Both deans pointed to the strength of the colleges of engineering and computing and information science as competitive advantages. Dean Huttenlocher stated that what they are “looking to do with the technology campus in New York, is to accelerate the preparation of leaders who will contribute to creating and managing the largest and most influential companies in the nation. And moreover, we’re looking to develop new companies in the city of New York, creating jobs and stimulating the economy”. Dean Collins focused on the possibilities the new campus presents for Cornell’s students and Provost Fuchs tied economic development back to the founding mission of the university. Fuchs said, “Cornell has a commitment to economic development in terms of its very foundation laid 150 years ago. We have a commitment to the state of New York, and the New York

City initiative gives us the opportunity to keep fulfilling that mission. Creating jobs and transferring technologies to the workplace are part of our objectives as an institution” (Ju, 2011).

V. Cornell NYC Tech campus programs will center around ‘hubs’

The proposed tech campus will be “organized around areas of interdisciplinary research which are also relevant to commercial impact, rather than traditional academic departments”, according to President Skorton in an article in the August 31, 2011 Cornell Chronicle. According to the Provost Fuchs, faculty leaders are “helping to define the academic content” in four key areas: Mobile Social Interaction; Intelligent, Trustworthy Services; Technologies for a Healthier Life; and Smart Technologies for the Built Environment. These hubs will be described in the proposal that will be submitted to the New York City Economic Development Corp on October 28, 2011 (Ju 2011).

VI. Cornell NYC Tech campus “would expand Ithaca-based faculty, student opportunities”

In a Cornell Chronicle article on August 31, 2011, Provost Fuchs stated his view that the new campus in New York City will create new opportunities in Ithaca, as well as New York City. The new campus, he said, will raise Cornell’s “visibility and capacity, enhancing our overall ability to attract new funding and compete for programs. He also pointed out that the campus will “attract thousands of master’s and Ph.D. level students, and undergraduates from Ithaca “while not getting degrees on the campus, would also have opportunities for research and internships.” The dean of the school of architecture,

art and planning was quoted in the article. That college has a presence in New York City and the dean was of the opinion that their program would be advantaged by a greater Cornell presence in New York City (Ju, 2011).

VII. Student Assembly passes resolution to unite unites students in support Cornell NYC Tech campus

On September 8, 2011, the Student Assembly “unanimously approved a resolution that create an ad-hoc committee to unite students in support of the NYC tech campus”, according to a Cornell Chronicle article on September 9, 2011 (Ju, 2011). Students are quoted in the article expressing their desire to strengthen the economy of New York City and to leave Cornell “a much stronger institution than when we got here”. The students note how many of them have lived or worked in New York City. The students also express their view that Cornell will be more effective at strengthening the New York City economy than Stanford, another university believed to be submitting a proposal.

The students’ ad hoc committee has already begun its activities by “working on a video to showcase the uniqueness of Cornell students and their desire for the campus, and brainstorming ideas for op-eds, rallies on the Engineering Quad and letter campaigns” according to the article (Ju 2011).

The article also notes that proposals are due to the mayor’s office by October 28, 2011.

VIII. Fall 2011 Ezra Magazine includes an End Note written by Dean Dan Huttenlocher

In his End Note “Why Cornell is the right fit for a new Big Apple tech campus”, Huttenlocher makes the argument that Cornell was already preparing students to bring their technology to market, either into existing businesses or through their own start-up businesses. He says Cornell views the NYC Tech campus as:

a unique opportunity to accelerate Cornell’s development of tech startups by creating a place for faculty, researchers, students, entrepreneurs and established firms to work more closely together on creating commercial value. This new campus would complement Cornell’s more basic technology research focus on the Ithaca campus, much in the way that the translational medical research at Weill Cornell Medical College complements basic research in the biological sciences in Ithaca (Huttenlocher 2011).

IX. Students begin an online Change.org petition in support of Cornell’s Cornell NYC Tech campus proposal

Written by “a group of Cornell students, alumni, parents, and friends”, a petition addressed to Mayor Bloomberg was posted on the website Change.org in support of Cornell’s proposal to create the new tech campus in New York City. The letter eventually collected over 21,000 signatures and was delivered to the Mayor prior to the submission of Cornell’s proposal on October 28, 2011 (Cornellians for NYC’s Tech Campus 2011).

X. The Academic Programs and Policies Committee (CAPP) of the Faculty Senate issue a report regarding the Cornell NYC Tech campus proposal on September 11, 2011

Provost Fuchs, asked the Committee on Academic Programs and Policies (CAPP) of the Cornell University Faculty Senate to review information regarding “Cornell’s developing proposal for an applied sciences and engineering campus in New York City”. The report outlines and assesses “some of the likely concerns and consequences for faculty regarding this proposal.” Members of CAPP considered “three broad models of faculty governance that remain under consideration”. They also “assess some implications of the Cornell NYC Tech teaching model, hub vs. departmental prerogatives, the nature of central leadership at Cornell NYC Tech, the roles of non-tenure track faculty, and some important issues regarding non-academic staff.” The report reviews the advantages and disadvantages of three models and favors the model that has “all Cornell NYC Tech faculty primarily affiliated with an Ithaca-based academic department and to be full members of that department, yet also flexibly organized into a superstructure that is local to the Cornell NYC Tech campus and serves its mission (roughly, the *Faculty of Computing and Information Sciences* model).” The report also includes “a few proposed strategies for success that arose from our discussions, most importantly the infrastructural bases for intercampus cohesion: videoconferencing, affordable short-term housing, and intercampus transportation” (Cornell NYC Proposal 2011).

XI. Provost Fuchs reviews the plan to submit a proposal to New York City with the Faculty Senate on September 14, 2011

In the powerpoint presentation to the faculty, the provost notes that CAPP (Academic Programs and Policies Committee) was asked in March 2011 to “serve as a cross-college faculty advisory committee to the Provost's office regarding Cornell's development of a proposal.” Their report was made available on September 11, 2011.

“CAPP’s primary role to date has been to assess the strengths and weaknesses of different proposals for the academic organization of the Cornell NYC Tech campus, along with issues of concern for departmental cohesion and research efficacy, instruction, faculty hiring and governance, and the allocation and control of resources.”

At the request of CAPP, the materials related to the proposal were made available to senators through the Dean of Faculty Office for review prior to the October 28, 2011 submission of the proposal (NYC Initiative 2011).

XII. September 27, 2011 New York City alumni event to hear about Cornell NYC Tech campus is sold out

On September 30, 2011, the Cornell Chronicle reported on a panel discussion held at the Google headquarters in Manhattan. Dan Huttenlocher updated the audience on the university’s plans to compete to build and operate a tech campus in New York City. The panel, described as “techpreneurs” expressed their support for the effort (Keating 2011).

XIII. Board of Trustees hold a special meeting on October 12, 2011 to consider the Cornell NYC Tech Campus plan

On October 17, 2011 the Cornell Chronicle reported that the Cornell Board of Trustees unanimously endorsed the Cornell NYC Tech Campus plan at a special meeting held on October 12th in New York City.

After the board meeting concluded, President Skorton and Provost Fuchs were joined by leaders of the Board of Trustees at a press event. The Chairman of the Board, Pete Meinig, noted that the board had “done its homework” over the last 10 months in considering the proposal. President Skorton described the board leaders as “the group that helped lead the way to garner support from within and outside the university for the new campus”. “It’s clear that we’re making a very, very visionary move for Cornell”, said Chairman Meinig (Ju 2011).

XIV. Cornell announces that it will partner with The Technion – Israel Institute of Technology - in its bid to win the New York City tech campus competition

On October 18, 2011, Cornell announced in the Cornell Chronicle that the two institutions would partner in response to the request for proposals, due to Mayor Bloomberg on October 28, 2011. The announcement said that both institutions will be “joining in a full scale campus - not a satellite of either school – to open in 2012.” The article said that more details about the nature of the partnership will be included in the proposal.

The article details several key attributes of the partnership between Cornell and the Technion:

An integral part of the campus will be the Technion-Cornell Innovation Institute (TCII), a 50-50 collaboration between the two universities to form a graduate program that will focus on commercialization of immediate relevance to the city's economic growth. Second, the campus's academic hubs will provide an interdisciplinary environment to better prepare students for careers in tech companies, large and small, where the problems to be solved involve using technical knowhow and also expertise in other domains at the heart of the city's key industries. Finally, for their degrees, students will be required to take courses that prepare them to be entrepreneurs and early stage investors, fueling the rapid expansion of the tech ecosystem in New York ('Cornell, Technion will partner in groundbreaking NYC Tech Campus' 2011).

The article also outlines Cornell's current presence in New York City:

Cornell's portfolio in New York City includes the world-class Weill Cornell Medical College -- where Cornell is now engaged in a \$1 billion capital project that includes construction of a new state-of-the-art medical research facility -- as well as Cornell Cooperative Extension-New York City, Cornell's Industrial and Labor Relations in NYC in Midtown, Architecture, Art and Planning Center in Chelsea, Cornell Financial Engineering in Manhattan off Wall Street, Cornell-sponsored Food and Finance High School on the West Side, and various programs in disciplines ranging from labor and employment law to human ecology. The city is now home to almost 50,000 Cornell alumni -- including thousands already working in the tech sector -- and about 5,000 Cornell employees ('Cornell, Technion will partner in groundbreaking NYC Tech Campus' 2011).

XV. [Cornell highlights expressions of support from academic and business leaders](#)

On October 20, 2011, the Cornell Chronicle quotes from “numerous expressions of support” that “have been received from a wide variety of notable entrepreneurs and academics” including: Dan Shechtman, Professor of Materials Science at the Technion, Sandy Weill, New York philanthropist and financier, Irwin Jacobs, the founding chairman and CEO of Qualcomm, Michal Lipson, Associate Professor of electrical and computer engineering at Cornell, Micah Rosenbloom '98, CEO of his third startup, Novophage Inc., and founder partner at Founder Collective, Dr. Shay David '08, co-founder and vice president of business and community development at Kaltura Inc., David Lifson '05/'06, co-founder and CEO of Postling, Bill Trenchard '97, founder partner of Founder Collective, and co-founder and executive chairman of ReadyForce (‘NYC Tech Campus partnership generates excitement’ 2011).

XVI. [Dean Dan Huttenlocher speaks to alumni on Trustee Council weekend](#)

In an article on October 21, 2011 in the Cornell Chronicle, it was reported that Dean of Computing and Information Sciences Dan Huttenlocher spoke to trustees and alumni in an academic presentation during Trustee Council Weekend. During the presentation Huttenlocher said “We’re just the best ones to unleash this development in New York City. We’re a tech powerhouse, absolutely, hands down.”

Proposals are due to the city of New York on October 28, 2011. (Ju 2011)

XVII. On October 28, 2011 Cornell submits its proposal to New York City to build the Cornell NYC Tech campus

On October 27, 2011 (Ju 2011) the Cornell Chronicle reports that the university will submit its proposal to build a tech campus in New York City. According to the article, “the campus, most likely to be built on Roosevelt Island, would combine the full spectrum of both institutions' academic strengths, as well as Cornell's entrepreneurial culture and deep existing connection to the city.”

“Bloomberg is expected to announce a winner by the end of 2011” (Ju 2011).

XVIII. Stanford drops out of the competition to build the New York City applied science and engineering tech campus

On December 16, 2011 Stanford announced that it was dropping its bid to build the new campus in New York City. Stanford News reported that “After several weeks of negotiations with New York City, university leaders and the Stanford Board of Trustees have determined that it would not be in the best interests of the university to continue to pursue the opportunity” (‘Stanford University withdraws its bid for a NYC campus’ 2011)

XIX. Cornell announces a \$350 million gift to support the development of an applied science and engineering campus in New York City.

On the same day that Stanford announces they are dropping out of the competition, Cornell makes public that they have secured a \$350 million dollar gift in support of the Cornell NYC Tech campus. The gift was announced from by President Skorton in a university statement on December 16, 2011. Skorton’s letter states, “At Cornell, our

entire community has come together, in a way that happens only so often in an institution's history, with winning ideas, energy and the creativity that the Mayor's challenge deserves." The source of the gift is not named ('Cornell announces largest gift in university history for New York City tech campus' 2011).

XX. Cornell is announced as the winner of the New York City competition to build the tech campus

On December 19, 2011, ('Cornell wins NYC Tech Campus bid' 2011) the Cornell Chronicle reports that, after months of "negotiations, cheerleading and pleading their case", Cornell University and Technion are announced as the winner of the competition held by Mayor Bloomberg to identify a partner to build a new applied science and technology campus in New York City.

The Office of the Mayor of New York City issues a press release on December 19, 2011 from Mayor Bloomberg, Cornell President Skorton and Technion President Lavie announcing a "historic partnership to build a new applied sciences campus on Roosevelt Island."

The detailed article in the Cornell Chronicle on December 19, 2011 lays out many specifics about the planned campus.

Cornell/Technion has laid out an aggressive plan for the project, which will ultimately culminate in the completion of a 2 million square foot build-out housing for up to 2,500 students and nearly 280 faculty members by 2043. When completed, the new Roosevelt Island campus will result in an increase in the number of full-time, graduate engineering students enrolled in leading New York City Master's and Ph.D. programs by approximately 70 percent. Prior to commencement of construction on Roosevelt Island, Cornell/Technion plans to open in an off-site location in 2012, with the first phase of their permanent Roosevelt Island home expected to open by no later than 2017. By 2027 the campus will have expanded to over 1.3

million square feet. Cornell/Technion has agreed to a 99-year lease for the Roosevelt Island site, with an option to purchase the land at the end of the term for \$1. Cornell will develop and own the campus itself, and will assume financial responsibility for its establishment and operations.

The Cornell/Technion proposal included a number of programmatic and development details that aligned with the City's vision for the *Applied Sciences NYC* initiative that caused it to stand out. The NYC Tech Campus is expected to become a world-leading institution, conferring graduate degrees and conducting research in the applied sciences with a commitment to innovation, commercialization, and the creation and retention of businesses and jobs in New York City. Academic uses are anticipated to range from classrooms, to laboratories, libraries, teaming areas and lecture halls, to start-up incubator and accelerator space. The remainder of the space in the campus will be devoted to residential uses, a conference center, as well as ancillary uses, such as retail in support of the faculty, staff and students on the campus.

The campus will be organized around three interdisciplinary hubs: Connective Media, Healthier Life, and the Built Environment. Cornell will immediately offer Master and Doctoral degrees in areas such as Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, and Information Science and Engineering. In addition, after receiving the required accreditation, the campus will also offer innovative Technion-Cornell dual Master of Applied Sciences degrees ('Cornell wins NYC Tech Campus bid' 2011).

XXI. Charles Feeney and The Atlantic Philanthropies are identified as the Cornell NYC Tech campus donor

The donor of the gift had not been named when it was announced on December 16, 2011. But in a statement by the university in the Cornell Chronicle on December 20th, the university confirmed that 350 million dollar gift was given by alumnus Chuck Feeney, '56. Feeney said, in a statement "This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for Cornell University and Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, together with the city of New York, to create economic and educational opportunity on a transformational scale" (Wilensky 2011)

XXII. Reactions to Cornell and Technion being awarded the applied science and engineering campus are shared.

On December 21, 2011, the Cornell Chronicle shared reactions from the presidents of Cornell and Technion, the provost of Cornell regarding news that Cornell and Technion had been chosen to build the new campus on Roosevelt Island. Others who spoke in favor of the decision included: Deans Dan Huttenlocher and Lance Collins, Board of Overseer chair Sandy Weill, Presidential Councilor Bob Appel, Vice President Kyu Whang, Alumni David Shay, and Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

President Skorton said, in part, "The number of alumni of The Technion and of Cornell who have stepped forward with not just moral support but sage advice and many other ways of keeping the wind at our backs has been amazing."

Provost Fuchs' reaction included: "I believe it's the fact that the university is part of New York City already. Many of us have family members here, we have many alumni that have grown up in the city, and we have all of our programs here, from each of the colleges in Ithaca as well as the medical school. The city has been a part of our DNA, our blood, and now we have an opportunity to create a new campus. It's understood inherently by students, alumni, staff and faculty that we as Cornell University should and will have a major new presence in the city. It's just an obvious part of our destiny."

Dan Huttenlocher, Dean of Computing and Information Sciences, is quoted as saying:

"It's just clear we have had amazing momentum. The momentum of the petition with 20,000 signatures that was brought to [Deputy Mayor] Bob Steel's office, incredible support of student groups, alumni and faculty, and this [\$350 million] gift was just something that was a piece of that momentum. It certainly takes a lot of the immediate

pressure off. There is still a lot of fundraising to do for this campus and the Ithaca campus, but it makes it very clear to everybody what we said at the beginning. This is going to be growth of Cornell University. This is adding to the university, not taking resources from Ithaca" ('NYC Tech Campus leaders react to Cornell, Technion win' 2011)

Dean of the College of Engineering, Lance Collins, said, in part, "One of the strengths of our campus is we will have mentoring for students. ... Thousands of our alumni in the tech sector in New York City have eagerly volunteered to be mentors to our students. It's a tremendous advantage. Alumni have played an incredible role throughout the beginning. It's also been a matter of strong faculty support, and support from the administration and the board of trustees."

Sanford Weill, chair of the Board of Overseers of Weill Cornell Medical College, said "I think it's a phenomenal thing. I think it's going to be transforming for the university, I think it's going to be transforming for the city, and I think it's going to be a great new partnership of Weill Cornell and Cornell's engineering campus -- just across a little river. And I think lots of good things are going to come. The partnership with Technion is brilliant, and there are going to be a lot of great people coming together to make this a really outstanding new facility for Cornell."

Shay David, Ph.D. 2008 said "I was excited. I was part of it and I helped spread the word, signed the petitions and sat on some of the advisory committees when we were thinking about the proposal. In particular I think what the alumni and student body understand is the 21st century is all about networks, creating the connection between tech, finance, alumni and the companies that are going to hire them" (NYC Tech

Campus leaders react to Cornell, Technion win 2011).

XXIII. On December 25, 2011, the New York Times publishes an article “Alliance Formed Secretly to Win Deal for Campus”

The article reports that Cornell and the Technion had been meeting in secret since March, 2011, not sharing the possibility of their collaboration with the deputy mayor for economic development until the end of summer. The partnership was not announced publicly until October 18, 2011, “10 days before the city’s deadline for proposals”.

The article goes on to say that “Cornell was primed for the project in less obvious ways. In 2009-10, Dr. Skorton led a state task force on economic partnerships between businesses and universities, which dwelt at length on the role of technology.”

In addition, in “2010, the university wrote a strategic plan calling for ‘a stronger footprint or base for Cornell’s education, research and outreach programs in New York City,’ acknowledging the decades-old concerns over the limitations of its home upstate. The article notes that “few of Cornell’s alumni entrepreneurs choose to settle in Ithaca, which has a population of 30,000 and is known more for harsh winters than for start-ups. (Indeed, some 50,000 Cornell alumni live in the New York metropolitan area.)” (Perez-Pena 2011).

XXIV. On February 16, 2012, Cornell announced the team that will lead Cornell Tech in New York City and describes their duties.

Dean Dan Huttenlocher, who has been dean of Computing and Information Sciences was named as vice provost and founding dean of CornellNYC Tech campus. Cathy

Dove, who has served as associate dean of the college of engineering became vice president of the new campus and Craig Gotsman became the first director of the Technion-Cornell Innovation Institute (TCII).

Huttenlocher “will co-chair, along with Cornell's Dean of Engineering Lance Collins, a group of academic leaders from across Cornell to build the academic programs in New York City, from the basics through accreditation.” In addition, Collins will be “engaged in developing the relationship between the new campus and the Ithaca-based programs, so that the university maximizes the leverage of this unique opportunity.” Collins together with “Huttenlocher, Dove and Fuchs on the leadership team on the tech campus proposal.”

The announcements were made by the president and provost of Cornell and the mayor of New York City (‘NYC tech campus top leadership team named’ 2011)

XXV. In October 2012 the Committee on Academic Policies and Programs (CAPP) of the Faculty Senate recommends approval of the Faculty Senate resolution to approve a Master of Science degree at Cornell Tech

CAPP reviewed a proposal “to establish a new Master of Science (MS) Degree in Information Systems (*Concentration in Connective Media*) to be offered at Cornell NYC Tech by the Cornell Graduate Fields of Computer Science and Information Science, as a dual degree with the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.”

CAPP noted that “Five existing Cornell Masters of Engineering degree programs have been implemented in slightly modified form at Cornell NYC Tech, as reported to the Senate in May 2012. The present proposal is the first dual degree designed for Cornell

NYC Tech.”

CAPP recommended that the full Faculty Senate approve the establishment of the new degree, which had previously been approved by the General Committee of the Graduate School (Huttenlocher 2012).

XXVI. On January 21, 2013 the ‘beta’ class of eight students begins instruction at Cornell Tech, pursuing a one year Cornell Master of Engineering degree in computer science.

The Cornell Chronicle (‘Cornell Tech welcomes its first class of students’ 2013) reported the start of classes at Cornell Tech’s temporary location in space donated by Google.

“Located in Chelsea, the program will remain in the Google building until it moves to its permanent space on Roosevelt Island in 2017.”

In the future, one-year Cornell professional master's degree programs “will be offered in the fields of electrical and computer engineering, information science, operations research and information engineering, as well as a tech-oriented one-year MBA.”

“Planning is also under way for a two-year Master of Science dual degree offered by Cornell and its academic partner, the Technion - Israel Institute of Technology. This new program will combine information technology with expertise in one of the three interdisciplinary focal areas or “hubs”: connective media, healthier life or the built environment (‘Cornell Tech welcomes its first class of students’ 2013).”

XXVII. On March 1, 2013 The Nation published an article “Cornell NYC Tech’s Alarming Ties to the Israeli Occupation”

The article, referencing the New York Times article printed on December 25, 2011, indicated that Cornell and Technion were “planting seeds of collaboration well before Bloomberg announced the bid.” The Nation reports that “to avoid the appearance of a pre-conceived partnership, each submitted a separate expression of interest in March 2011.” Shortly thereafter, the schools began “months of secretive discussions to cement their collaboration”, reaching agreement in July, 2011.

The article reports concerns raised by students and faculty regarding the collaboration with Technion.

The process “violated the rules of [university] governance,” says English professor Eric Cheyfitz. While Cheyfitz, who is Jewish and has an Israeli daughter, opposes the partnership and Israel’s oppression of Palestinians, his “first concern is for democratic process.” He said there should have been a debate before the decision for Cornell to partner with the Technion was made.

The school’s chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) also challenged the partnership. According to Cornell senior and SJP member Emily Koppelman, the group circulated a petition among students and faculty demanding an end to the partnership. However, by the time the petition went up “it was pretty much a done deal”, said Koppelman. The partnership was already publicly announced and Cornell and Technion moved forward with their plans. Cheyfitz and Koppelman both said that Cornell administrators have been careful to avoid talking about Technion’s role in developing military technology used in the Israeli occupation and campus discussion on the issue is largely muted. Despite the silence, some students and faculty continue to speak out. The petition is still up and has over 1,000 signatures. Koppelman said her problem with Technion is that it’s “employing students to build computer systems and weapons that perpetuate the Israeli occupation. The occupation is wrong, illegal and should end” (Hudson 2013)

XXVIII. April 22, 2013 Joan and Irwin Jacobs announced a \$133 million gift to Cornell University and the Technion to create the Joan & Irwin Jacobs Technion-Cornell Institute within Cornell NYC Tech campus

The Cornell Chronicle reports on April 22, 2013 the gift by alumni Irwin Mark Jacobs '54 and Joan Klein Jacobs '55 “was announced at New York City Hall April 22 by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Cornell President David Skorton and Technion President Peretz Lavie.”

“The gift will help support joint activities between Cornell and the Technion, including dual master’s degree programs, faculty, graduate students and industry interactions” (Ju 2013)

XXIX. Cornell announces 50 million dollar naming gift from Verizon to build Executive Education Center at Cornell NYC Tech campus

On February 2, 2015, Cornell announces that Verizon has provided the naming gift for the executive education center at Cornell NYC Tech campus. The Verizon Education Center “will be a gathering place for the tech community and a place for leveraging the campus’s impact on technology beyond its degree programs.” The Executive Center, along with the academic building, residential building and corporate co-location building will be part of first construction phase of the campus when it opens in fall 2017 (‘\$50M Verizon gift names Cornell Tech executive ed center’ 2015).

XXX. Cornell names the first academic building at Cornell NYC Tech campus following a 100 million dollar gift

On June 17, 2015 the Cornell Chronicle reports that at the June 16, 2015 event, “marking the groundbreaking for Cornell Tech” on the future site for the new applied science campus on Roosevelt Island, the university announced that the first academic building will be named the Bloomberg Center, after Emma and Georgina Bloomberg, the daughters of former Mayor Mike Bloomberg. The gift of “100 million dollars from Bloomberg Philanthropies will help to fund the campus construction”, planned to begin operations in fall of 2017.

New York City Mayor De Blasio was present and spoke at the groundbreaking event. “Planners project Cornell Tech and the city’s applied sciences sector will generate 48,000 new jobs and \$33 billion in economic impact and more than double the number of full-time graduate engineering students and faculty in New York in the next 30 years, de Blasio said.”

Phase one construction, slated for completion in 2017, will include “some of the most sustainable buildings on the planet”:

The Bloomberg Center, on which began construction in March. The Bloomberg Center aspires to be one of the largest net-zero structures in the country by generating renewable energy through geothermal heat and solar panels.

The residential building will become the first high-rise residential building in the world built to passive house standards, a rigorous building standard for reducing energy consumption using a super-insulated building façade, an airtight building envelope and an energy recovery ventilation system. The Bridge at Cornell Tech, is designed to achieve LEED Silver certification. The first-of-its-kind building will house recent Cornell Tech graduate entrepreneurs with ideas for new companies, promising startups ready for major growth, and established companies seeking to test their next products. The collaborative space will create room for companies to

engage with students, faculty and researchers.

The Verizon Executive Education Center, aided by a \$50 million gift from Verizon, to be completed by 2019 or 2020. The center will be a place for technology leaders and innovators to gather and an executive education center that aims to provide digital-age educational and collaborative programs (Ramanujan 2015).

“When completed, the campus will span 12 acres on Roosevelt Island and house approximately 2,000 graduate students and hundreds of faculty and staff.”

“We graduated 75 students last month, including our first two Ph.D. students,’ said Dan Huttenlocher, dean of Cornell Tech.” Cornell Tech has operating “since 2013 in temporary space provided by Google in Manhattan’s Chelsea neighborhood.”

“About half of this year’s master’s graduates were in computer science – a degree that emphasizes tech entrepreneurship – and the other half received a Johnson Cornell Tech MBA. ‘About 30 percent of our graduates this year are creating new companies here in New York City, and overall well over half of our graduates will be working in New York City, helping drive creation of new jobs not just in the tech industry, but well beyond,’ Huttenlocher added” (Ramanujan 2015).

Observations and Analysis - Cornell NYC Tech

The process leaders used to create Cornell Tech on Roosevelt Island in New York City is observed and analyzed relative to the guidance provided by Larry Hirschhorn (1994) to leaders of loosely coupled organizations as they advance change. Hirschhorn advised leaders to respect the characteristics of the organization, including its semi-autonomous nature of its units; to protect and guide the organization through changes

by advancing strategic themes through a careful planning framework; and to focus on changes that occur “between the seams” of the organization’s units (1994 p.2).

Align change plans with characteristics of the university and acknowledge the semi-autonomous status of units of the university

The applied science campus that will open on Roosevelt Island in fall 2017 began as a strong relationship between Cornell University and the city of New York. Mayor Bloomberg created a competitive bid process to identify higher education partners that would bring new economic opportunities to the city. This coupling, between the university and New York City is a fundamental, ongoing, relationship that defines aspects of the applied campus that is now known as Cornell Tech.

Mayor Bloomberg identified the need to diversify the New York City. Through the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) he sought bids from universities to respond to “Applied Science NYC”, a proposal seeking responses from universities interested in creating or expanding an applied science campus in the city. In a November 1, 2011 NYCEDC press release stated “Applied Sciences NYC is designed to capitalize on the considerable growth presently occurring within the science, technology and research fields, and is to build on the Bloomberg Administration’s record of creating a more diverse and competitive economy for the future” (‘Mayor Bloomberg Announces Next Steps in City’s Groundbreaking EDC Initiative Seeking a New or Expanded Applied Sciences Campus in New York City’ 2011).

Cornell leaders expressed interest early on in bidding for this new opportunity. They connected their qualification for being selected as the winning university with Cornell's designation as the land grant university for New York State. In 1862 Congress passed the Morrill Act to provide for "at least one college in each state where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific or classical studies, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts...in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes" ('The Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890' 2016). The bill provided for a grant of federal land to each state, which could sell the land and use the proceeds to build and operate its new college. The provost pointed to the university's obligations as the land grant university saying "We have a commitment to the state of New York, and the New York City initiative gives us the opportunity to keep fulfilling that mission. Creating jobs and transferring technologies to the workplace are part of our objectives as an institution" (Ju 2011). He coupled the university's mission at the new campus not only with the city, but also with its mission as the land grant university for New York State. The provost aligned the proposal with the fundamental character of the university.

There are also connections between the new applied science campus and the other Cornell programs in New York City. The university already had several programs in New York City including the Weill Cornell Medicine, an architecture program, an engineering program, and several extension programs. The dean of the college of architecture, art and planning noted in a Cornell Chronicle article on August 31, 2011

that the new campus would benefit all Cornell programs in New York City by enhancing the university's overall presence in the city (Ju 2011). There are additional alignments between existing units of the university and the proposed campus.

The structure of Cornell Tech was, in some respects, developed in response to the call for proposals by New York City. Responding to the proposal meant that Cornell would be building a new campus away from its main campus in Ithaca, New York. The geographical distance between the campuses created structural distance between the campuses. To “tether” Cornell Tech to the Ithaca campus, the decision was made that the faculty would be tenured in departments of colleges in Ithaca. In order to avoid competing with itself, Cornell Tech would offer no undergraduate degrees and it would differentiate its graduate degrees from those offered in Ithaca. This design would provide a structural connection and differentiation of curriculum from that offered in Ithaca.

This structural connection relies on the faculty and deans to create academic connections between the two campuses. Tenure of faculty who reside at Cornell Tech will require an understanding of their academic progress by faculty on the Ithaca campus. Voting on the tenure of faculty who reside on another campus will create a tight coupling between these academics. Similarly, the progress of PhD candidates whose committees are comprised of faculty from both campuses will require coordination among the faculty (Ju 2011).

The organizational design of Cornell Tech relies on academics from both campuses to deliver educational and research programs at Cornell Tech and to connect graduate students to Ithaca programs as appropriate. Administratively, Cornell Tech must operate under the financial and procedural expectations of the university. This connects Cornell Tech to the university administratively and financially. This design respects the existing campus priorities and builds upon them.

In July 2011, the dean of computing and information sciences, who went on to become the dean of Cornell Tech, identified a connection between Cornell Tech's applied approach to commercialization and the Ithaca campus's "more basic technology research". This connection creates coupling opportunities for faculty and students in Ithaca and at Cornell Tech. These academic couplings are a way to connect Cornell Tech to the Ithaca campus. He also identified the connection of Cornell Tech students to the New York City entrepreneurial and start-up business communities, through research opportunities, by providing students with mentorship support in starting their own businesses and in creating career opportunities within New York City existing businesses. The dean of engineering expressed his hope that alumni would be part of the business community that will mentor students at the campus and an alumnus expressed optimism that alumni will offer Cornell Tech graduates opportunities within their businesses. These connections create coupling opportunities between students and alumni, between faculty and alumni, between the city's business community and Cornell's academic community and within the Cornell community. As important, they

acknowledge the semi-autonomous nature of the colleges and units of the university, while identifying new collaborative opportunities (Ju 2011).

Cornell Tech is organized around “hubs”. These hubs create loose couplings in broad academic and research areas that at the time of the original proposal submission were planned to include Mobile Social Interaction; Intelligent, Trustworthy Services; Technologies for a Healthier Life; and Smart Technologies for the Built Environment. These hubs replace traditional departments and are intended to be more fluid. They have shifted already, and are currently found in the Jacobs Institute (formerly the Technion-Cornell Innovation Institute) as *Connective Media, Healthier Life and Built Environment*. These hubs create new, semi-autonomous elements within the new campus (Ramanujan 2015).

Protect the system by keeping it within its safety zone and managing its contradictions and guide the system by developing strategic themes and building a planning framework

University leaders acknowledged the importance of involving faculty and students as Cornell Tech was designed. They recognized the importance of advancing the proposal process with the guidance of the faculty. They also recognized the importance of integrating the new campus with the existing Ithaca-based academic programs, while designing a new approach to graduate applied science learning.

The provost reached out to seek input from the faculty through the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate is part of the university's shared governance system and has a formal role to consider questions of educational policy that concern more than one college. The provost sought the advice of the faculty on issues beyond educational policy and accepted their report in September 2011, prior to submission of the proposal, ultimately adopting their proposed structure for the design of the faculty governance model. The work of the faculty on the structure of the new college demonstrated a cross system coupling (NYC Initiative 2011).

Students and alumni supported the efforts of the university leaders who advanced the proposal to build the applied science campus in New York City. Students tend to connect most often with faculty in the loosely coupled academic system of the university and are less likely to affiliate with the university administration. When students and alumni became aware of the university's intention to respond to New York City's request for proposals, many identified positively with the new campus proposal. Students, particularly those from the New York City area are quoted in Cornell Chronicle articles as supporting the idea of strengthening the economy of city (Ju 2011). Their efforts to support the proposal attracted the interest of alumni who worked with students. Supporting the Cornell Tech effort was a positive opportunity for alumni and students to show their loyalty to the university. Over 21,000 students, alumni and others signed the change.org petition in support of the Cornell plan ('Cornellians for NYC's Tech Campus' 2011). The proposal and the university leaders who were advancing it gained an almost celebrity status among many Cornell alumni. There was very little voiced opposition to

the plan in advance of the decision by New York City. Concerns that were raised about cost or impact on the main campus were quickly addressed and received little attention. The connections university leaders made with students and alumni related to the proposal resulted in significant support for the plan.

The new campus was designed to be tethered to the Ithaca-based colleges through ongoing academic connections. The deans of the colleges that will hire new faculty, together with key faculty from those colleges developed procedures that will govern how faculty will establish appointments, teaching and research at Cornell Tech. They focus on the primacy of the Ithaca departments, while clarifying that Cornell Tech will pay for work performed on that campus. They also highlight connections between faculty on both campuses (NYC Initiative 2011). The procedures illustrate how faculty will connect the two campuses through teaching and research on both campuses. There are also ongoing connections created through advising graduate students.

This structure represents tight coupling between Ithaca academic departments and Cornell Tech as it pertains to budget, time commitments, faculty effort and student advising and the graduate experience. The procedures indicate that faculty already at the Ithaca campus are expected to work with their current departments when they are interested in relocating, even temporarily, to Cornell Tech. However, when it comes to the cost of these efforts, the procedures make clear that Ithaca will not pay for services rendered at Cornell Tech (NYC Initiative 2011).

Involving faculty and students in the proposal process and tethering the new campus to Ithaca-based colleges helped leaders protect the university while it advanced the new campus proposal. This was important because the creation of Cornell Tech was not a faculty-led initiative, the provost and deans of Computing and Information Science and Engineering drove the effort. The provost and the deans drew in the faculty to advance the strategic theme of 'creating an applied science college'. The provost employed a planning process that called upon community members to create specific elements of the proposal, by seeking feedback through a committee of the Faculty Senate (CAPPS) in September 2011. CAPPS was asked to serve as a "cross college faculty advisory committee to the Provost's office regarding the development" of the Cornell Tech plan submission (NYC Initiative 2011). The faculty have authority given to it under the University Bylaws under Article XII to consider educational policy impacting more than one college (Cornell University Bylaws 2016).

The provost sought the input of the faculty regarding overall structure of the new campus and how it would relate to the Ithaca campus. The Academic Programs and Policies Committee (CAPP) of the Faculty Senate authored a report in September 2011 that proposed and ultimately recommended the structure that was adopted for the campus (NYC Initiative 2011). Faculty are primarily affiliated with an Ithaca-based academic department and are full members of that department, and also organized into Cornell Tech. After the university won the competition, the faculty reviewed and approved new degrees and proposed procedures.

The president and provost sought and received the approval of the Board of Trustees for the Cornell Tech plan. When this was reported in October 2011, the chairman of the board was quoted as saying that the board had “done its homework” for 10 months, indicating that it had been informed and involved, likely since the leadership became aware of the opportunity (Ju 2011).

The board of trustees appears to have been to be supportive of the plan submission, based upon public comments. Board members made supportive comments online and in articles. They are seen in pictures with public officials (Ju 2011). Overall, the leaders appear to have successfully protected and guided the organization through the early stages of the change. The planning process used by university leaders involved community members in moving the strategic theme towards a detailed proposal and involving trustees, students and alumni in generating support for the effort.

Make change “at the seams” between units of the university and boost synergistic combinations

Hirschhorn (1994) suggested that growth should occur “at the seams” between existing units of the system and that it should result in growth in the size of the organization, creating more specialized parts and combine old parts to take on a new shape or structure. It appears that the creation of a new applied science campus in New York City was “at the seams” between units of Cornell. Early indications are that it will create “energize synergistic combinations” in numerous ways.

Cornell Tech appears to be at the seams between computing and information science, engineering, business, and law. It advances a new applied learning approach to create economic opportunity in New York City. The provost and the two deans who led the effort to create the proposal advanced a strategic theme that responded to Mayor Bloomberg's call for proposals while working in the space between the existing colleges and units of the university to advance new synergistic combinations.

Hirschhorn recommended that changes occurring "at the seams" should result in growth in organization. Cornell Tech will result in growth in the overall size of Cornell. It will increase the university's footprint in New York City, the buildings it operates, the faculty and staff it employs, and the students it educates. New York City donated land valued at \$100 million dollars to seed the start of the campus. Alumnus Charles Feeney donated another \$350 million dollars to begin construction of the campus. Since then, Bloomberg Philanthropies donated \$100 million dollars to fund construction on the campus and Verizon donated \$50 million dollars towards construction of the Executive Education Center. When the campus on Roosevelt Island is complete in 2043, it will include "2 million square feet of space on 12 acres serving an academic community of nearly 2,500 " (Cornell Tech 2011).

Cornell Tech includes The Jacobs Technion-Cornell Institute, an example of a new synergistic combination. The Institute is where the university and the Technion will partner through three "hub" areas of focus. Two of the hub areas offer graduate degree programs - Health Tech and Connective Media. These degrees "focus on the need for

innovation in industries where New York City has historically excelled while always remaining anchored in technology.” The third hub is the “Runway Startup Program, which supports recent PhDs who draw on the resources in New York City to build on their research and develop tech companies on campus.” These hub areas are fluid and are expected to change as “social and economic needs change” (Cornell Tech 2011).

Cornell Tech is designed to encourage synergistic combinations with Ithaca-based programs. All faculty that are employed by Cornell who are working at Cornell Tech will be tenured in an Ithaca-based department. Students have opportunities to study on the Ithaca campus during the summers (Cornell Tech 2011). The Faculty Senate, leaders of Cornell Tech, and framers of the original proposal all stressed the importance of keeping the relationship between Cornell Tech and the Ithaca campus “porous”. This design is quite different from other new units, which tend to become highly autonomous and separate from one another.

In addition to offering Master’s degrees in computer science, electrical and computer engineering and operational research and information engineering, Cornell is offering dual degrees with Technion in connective media and health tech. They are also offering a Tech MBA, and a Master’s of Laws in Law, Technology and Entrepreneurship. In addition, the Jacobs Institute has created the Runway Startup program for postdocs to assist them in launching their business ideas. These degrees and programs demonstrate new collaborations between colleges of Cornell and with Technion. These

new degrees, and the Runway Startup Program, appear to be synergistic combinations that are responsive to needs identified in the tech sector (Cornell Tech 2011).

The efforts to establish Cornell Tech began as a response to a request by the mayor of New York City. The process of building the proposal engaged deans, faculty, students, alumni and leadership through coupling that included connections that crossed systems. The result appears to be a new organization within the loosely coupled academic system that was built “at the seams” of other units.

CHAPTER 4

CORNELL COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Timeline - Cornell College of Business

XXXI. Announcement of College of Business to CALS, Johnson and SHA Communities

On Monday, December 14, 2015 the Provost writes to the faculty, students and staff of the College of Agriculture and Life Science, School of Hotel Administration and Johnson Graduate School of Management announcing the intention to establish a “single, unified College of Business” (M. Kotlikoff, internal memorandum, December 14, 2015). The Cornell College of Business (CCB) will be comprised of the School of Hotel Administration (SHA), the Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management (Dyson), and the Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management (Johnson). The announcement explains that the establishment of the new college requires the approval of the Board of Trustees, which will consider the matter in January. Pending this approval, the memo indicates that faculty and academic leadership will work together to “determine the details of the new integrated structure” and alumni, students and staff will also have opportunities to be involved in processes.

The memo goes on to announce that the current dean of the Johnson School will become dean of CCB and the director of the Dyson school will become deputy dean and dean of academic affairs and that each school will be “presided over” by a dean who will have responsibility for that school’s academic program. The memo also outlines the benefits of the new college:

- **“Enhancing Opportunities for Undergraduate and Graduate Students and Post Doctoral Associates:** Students will have greater opportunity to learn across disciplines and collaborate with a broader network of faculty and fellow students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, creating even more knowledge-sharing opportunities for students.
- **Fostering a More Collaborative Research Environment for Faculty:** The cohesive College of Business will enable Cornell’s business and management faculty to collaborate more easily and effectively in cross-disciplinary research and grow the national and international influence of faculty scholarship and achievements.
- **Establishing a More Effective Structure:** Following the announcement, the leadership of the College of Business, CALS, Johnson and SHA will engage faculty in an effort to develop appropriate internal academic structures so as to enhance collaborations in teaching and research and coordinate faculty recruitment” (M. Kotlikoff, internal memorandum, December 14, 2015).

XXXII. [Cornell Daily Sun Reports that Cornell intends to establish College of Business – December 14, 2015](#)

The Sun, reporting from the memo sent out to the SHA, Johnson and CALS faculty, students, and staff reports that, while the University seeks to unify its business programs, it does not intend for the “integration” of the schools to cause them to change

their operations. “Each school will maintain its unique identity and mission, while its already strong stature, scope and impact will be markedly enhanced by its combination with faculty, curricular offerings and programs in a cohesive College of Business,” Vice President for University Relations, Joel Malina said (Silver 2015).

XXXIII. [Johnson’s Poets and Quants.com reports “Cornell Business School Mash-Up”](#)

On December 14, 2015, poets and quants reported the proposed college of business as a “mash-up” of three separate schools into a new larger business school to be led by the Johnson’s School’s dean. The newsletter predicts that the proposal will be controversial and notes that online “carping” has already begun (Byrne 2015).

XXXIV. [The Faculty Senate unanimously pass a resolution on December 16, 2015 that the Board of Trustees table the consideration of creation of the College of Business](#)

“Resolved, that the University Trustees table consideration of the creation of the College of Business until the Faculty Senate can deliberate on the proposal.” The resolution is sent to the Board of Trustees (College of Business Resolution 2016).

XXXV. [“Keep The Cornell Hotel School Independent” Facebook page is created on December 17, 2016](#)

An online petition (Jimenez, F, Lai, L, Liang, E, Laio, A 2015) is begun by alumni to protest the formation of the College of Business, with the intention of delivering it to the Board of Trustees prior to their vote in January, 2016. The petition is signed by three

alumni of the class of 2015 and one alumna from the class of 2014. They state their signatures are “on behalf of students, faculty members and alumni of SHA”

The Facebook page eventually collects nearly 1500 “likes” (Keep The Cornell Hotel School Independent 2015)

XXXVI. The President and Provost issue a university statement on plans to create a unified College of Business, pending approval by the Board of Trustees.

This statement (Garrett, E, Kotlikoff, M 2015) is placed on the university website on December 21, 2015 and is the first statement to the university community made by the university regarding the intention to create the college of business. In it the president and provost note the December 14 communications to the students, faculty and staff of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Johnson Graduate School of Management, and School of Hotel Administration were sent to members of those colleges to allow for “more formal planning to proceed”. The statement also indicates that the president and provost are engaging the broader Cornell community to gather input as the “benefits of integration” while “maintaining the individual strengths and special character of the programs” are realized.

XXXVII. IVY Coach reported on the creation of the College of Business, calling it “big news”.

The blog, IVY Coach, reports on the intention to create the College of Business on December 30, 2015, reporting from the Cornell Daily Sun article written by Zachary Silver on December 14, 2015 (Cornell College of Business 2015)

XXXVIII. The president responds to the Faculty Senate resolution of December 16, 2015 that requests the Board of Trustees table consideration of the creation of the College of Business.

The president responds to the Dean of Faculty in a letter dated January 4, 2016 (E. Garrett, internal memorandum, January 4, 2016). In that letter, she outlines her views of the authority of the faculty under bylaw article XIII (“And while I disagree with the expansive interpretation that some have assigned to that provision, I anticipate that many key aspects of developing the College of Business will depend on the guidance and direction of the faculty”) and her view that it was important that the board first amend the bylaws to “give formal recognition to the new administrative unit”.

XXXIX. The president, provost and dean of the School of Hotel Administration write to members of the Cornell Hotel Society to address concerns expressed by alumni of the Hotel School.

The Cornell Hotel Society describes itself on its website

<https://cornellhotelsociety.com/about/> as the “official alumni organization for the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration. The Cornell Hotel Society has chapters across the United States, in Canada, Latin America, Europe, Middle East & Africa, Asia and Pacific.

The January 7, 2016 (E. Garrett, M. Kotlikoff, M. Johnson, letter, January 7, 2016) letter reaffirms the intention to maintain the “brand of each school, while addressing the fragmented nature of business education at Cornell”. In this letter the president and

provost identify their objectives for the college as “elevating Cornell as an internationally renowned university” in business education and “enhancing the distinct brands of excellence” of the university’s “three accredited business schools”. It also lays out next steps including clarifying defining principles, consulting with faculty, creating advisory committees, and holding informational sessions for students. The letter links to an undated statement of support entitled “Why We Support the Creation of the College of Business” at Cornell University, written by alumni Bob Alter, SHA ’73, Lee Pillsbury SHA ’69, Andrew Tisch, SHA ’71 (B. Alter, L. Pillsbury, A. Tisch, undated letter). They point to the benefits of the new college to Hotel students, faculty and improvements to programming. The alumni authors make the following points:

“Such Board action creates the new College, but deliberately leaves unanswered the specifics of the extent of integration among the three schools and the plans for how such integration will work. We have endorsed this approach because we strongly believe that the details should be decided by the stakeholders within the three schools, and only after thoughtful and deliberate consultation and debate.

The strategic decision on whether to have a College of Business is the province of the president, the provost and the Board of Trustees, looking at the best interests of Cornell University. How to create and implement it should be the province of the faculty, administrators, students, staff, alumni, donors and other stakeholders who have the responsibility to make it successful.”

[XL. The provost announces the formation of the Faculty Governance Committee for the Cornell College of Business](#)

On January 12, 2016 the Faculty Governance Committee for CCB is announced in an email memorandum from the provost to the faculty in the College of Agriculture and Life Science, Johnson Graduate School of Management, and School of Hotel Administration (M. Kotlikoff, internal memorandum, January 12, 2016). The twelve-member committee

is co-chaired by the university deputy provost and deputy dean of the college of business and includes faculty from each of the three schools, plus the acting dean of the faculty. Ten of the twelve faculty on the committee are currently in administrative roles.

The committee will define program areas "across the three schools around common curricular and scholarly interests"; define the role of the program area leaders and school deans with "respect to faculty governance"; articulate promotion and tenure guidelines and processes for faculty "consultation on and governance over, major policy issues"; and identify issues that "need further work and deliberation". The email memo also states the intention to create staff, student and alumni advisory committees.

[XLI. Cornell Daily Sun reports that alumni are threatening to pull donations over proposed College of Business](#)

The January 24, 2016 article summarizes concerns being raised to the proposed CCB. It refers to the Faculty Senate resolution of December 16, 2015 that asks the Board of Trustees to table consideration of the creation of the College of Business until the Faculty Senate can deliberate on the proposal. It also notes that the Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management receives state funding, while the School of Hotel Administration and the Johnson School are privately funded. The co-mingling of state and private funds is raised as a concern. Alumni express concerns over the direction of their gifts, the president assures donors that gifts will remain in schools. Concerns are raised in the article by alumni of the Hotel School that the top ranking of the school will be impacted and some alumni indicate they will rethink their gifts to the school. Alumni

of the Hotel School express displeasure over learning about the proposed change by reading about it in the Cornell Sun. These alumni share their concern that combining the Hotel School with Johnson and Dyson will “end the industry-specific character of the Hotel School”. “Why would you combine three schools, and waste time, money and resources in Ithaca to boost the performance of one?” asks one alumnus. The alumni interviewed said they were worried that the Johnson School’s lower ranking would “bring down” the other schools. The “Keep Cornell Hotel School Independent” Facebook page is noted as having 700 likes and the petition has about 500 signatures (Rudolfsky 2016).

[XLII. The Cornell Daily Sun Editorial: How Not to Create a Business \(College\)](#)

On January 26, 2016 the editorial focuses primarily on the manner in which the university introduced the plan to create the College of Business. The editorial states that the way the administration announced the proposed college is “detrimental to the shared governance touted by administration. They also point out that the timing of the announcement – at the end of the semester – decreases the ability of faculty and students to offer input before the proposal is considered by the Board of Trustees. They urge the board to table the vote until there is an opportunity to engage with administration on the details of the college (EDITORIAL 2016).

XLIII. Inside Higher Education reports on the proposed change, noting the concerns of the faculty and alumni.

On January 26, 2016 the concerns of the faculty and alumni related to lack of involvement and consultation are noted, as are the concerns of Hotel School alumni that the distinctive nature of the school will be negatively impacted. The article takes note of the “Keep Cornell Hotel School Independent” Facebook page and reports on the Faculty Senate resolution to table the Board of Trustees vote (Wexler 2016).

XLIV. Dean of External Relations for the College of Business is named

On January 26, 2016 the dean of external relations for CCB, a faculty member from the School of Hotel Administration, is named. This is the first CCB leader named from the Hotel School (M. Kotlikoff, internal memorandum, January 26, 2016).

XLV. The University Assembly passes a resolution urging the Board of Trustees to table the vote on the Cornell College of Business

On January 27, 2016 the Cornell Daily Sun reports that on January 26, 2016, the University Assembly (UA), the university’s umbrella shared governance body, passed a resolution asking the Board of Trustees to table the vote on the College of Business until March 24, 2016. The University Assembly members express concerns over the lack of opportunity to provide input due to the timing of the proposal at the end of the semester. “I hope that through passing this resolution, the UA can influence the Board to hit the brakes on such a large administrative decision that impacts the lives of our faculty, staff and students, and sets a clear precedent to the new administration that we

don't make unilateral decisions here", said one member of the University Assembly. The resolution passed by a vote of 9-0-2 (Chu 2016).

XLVI. The Student Assembly vote to recommend that the Board of Trustees table the vote on the College of Business

The Cornell Daily Sun report on January 29, 2017 that the Student Assembly voted 20-0-3 to recommend that the Board of Trustees delay approval of the newly proposed College of Business. Some students expressed support for the proposed college, "arguing the unification will allow for new opportunities including the exchange of expertise and broader career exploration". Others expressed concern, including one student who said that "merging" the schools would take away from "the intrinsic value that draws a lot of people to the specific things that make Cornell what it is. The resolution ultimately passed 20-0-3 (Rudolfsky 2016).

XLVII. The president and provost hold a phone conference with 15 students and alumni to hear concerns regarding the College of Business

The Cornell Daily Sun reported on January 29, 2016 about a phone conference between the president and provost and 15 hand-picked students and alumni who shared their questions and concerns about the proposed College of Business. The phone conference replaced a meeting that was supposed to be take place in Philadelphia but was canceled due to weather. An alumnus who participated in the call said he expressed concerns that the ranking of the Hotel School and Dyson would suffer due to the creation of the new college. He went on to say that he and others

hope to “slow down” the process in order for him and other alumni to “have some time to negotiate” (Li 2016).

An on-campus open forum on February 2, 2016, to be hosted by the provost, is announced in the article (Li 2016).

XLVIII. Alumni Feeney and Dyson concerns are shared

On January 29, 2016, the day before the Board of Trustees is scheduled to vote to on the establishment of the College of Business, the Cornell Daily Sun publishes letters from Charles Feeney and John Dyson, prominent alumni and donors to the university. Charles Feeney, 1956 alumnus of the Hotel School who has donated significantly to the university, including providing 350 million dollars to support Cornell Tech. “I have always supported a strong and independent Hotel School with an equally strong and independent Dean at its helm. I don’t believe a decision on the merger is appropriate at this time unless and until additional study of the potential outcomes have been carefully reviewed”.

John Dyson, 1965 alumnus of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, noted that the provost and Dean of CALS had reached agreement with him to protect the essential elements of the Dyson School and CALS. His letter goes on to urge the Board to send the issue through the faculty and the committees of the board before voting. Dyson states, “It defies logic and common sense to assert that the University By-Laws should be changed before the merits of the proposal are fully vetted by all affected constituencies, including the affected Schools, Departments, Faculty, Employees,

Alumni and Students.” He goes on to say that the University Bylaws do not contemplate “such a cart-before-the-horse approach”. He points out that the issue should have been vetted in a board committee before being taken up at the full board level. He goes on to say that the Bylaws charge the University Faculty with considering “questions of education policy which concern more than one college, school or separate academic unit”. “Clearly, before a vote to amend the By-laws to create a new College incorporating three different schools is put to the Trustees, they should have the benefit of input from the Committee on Academic Affairs, the Faculty, and other affected constituents” (Rudolfsky 2016).

XLIX. The University Issues a Statement announcing that the Board of Trustees have authorized the College of Business.

On January 30, 2016 the university issued a statement that announced the vote of the Board of Trustees that day. The statement anticipates a launch of the college during the 2016-2017 academic year. It also acknowledges that “many” alumni, faculty and students are “upset” that this change was announced without a “comprehensive discussion”. The statement, signed by the president and the provost, states that they are “committed to ensuring that such questions and concerns are addressed going forward, as we work to preserve the unique strengths of each of our three schools”. The statement outlines the benefits of the new college that include “fostering diverse learning opportunities and collaboration among students at the undergraduate, graduate and professional levels” and enabling faculty to “engage more easily and effectively in cross-disciplinary research”. The statement announced an information session for

students on February 5th and a town hall forum on February 17. The statement refers readers to an online Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for more information about the College of Business (Garrett, E, Kotlikoff, M 2016).

L. The Cornell Chronicle reports the intention to establish a College of Business

On January 30, 2016 the university reported through the Cornell Chronicle, that it will launch the College of Business during the 2016-2017 academic year. The article emphasized enhanced “opportunities for undergraduate, graduate and post-doctoral students, fostering a more collaborative research environment for faculty and establishing a more effective administrative structure. “ The article also outlines the next steps for faculty, student, staff and alumni involvement in the development of the college:

Continuing over the next several months, the leaders of the three accredited business schools and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences will work with faculty, staff, students, and alumni to develop the academic processes that will be critical to achieving Cornell’s aims of faculty integration and individual school identity, and to ensuring that the decisions reached on academic organization, governance, and other important elements are broadly informed and address the concerns of the entire community of Cornell’s three superb schools. Informational sessions will also be held this semester for students to ask questions and learn how their current school will be integrated into the new College of Business and how this will further their educational opportunities. Forums will also be held for faculty, staff, and alumni (Keller 2016).

LI. Cornell Daily Sun report that students, faculty are split over creation of new College of Business

On January 31, 2016 the Cornell Daily Sun reported that, after the Board of Trustees approved the creation of the College of Business, some faculty and students felt their voices were ignored. A faculty member is quoted as saying, “It is shocking that the

president, provost and trustees ignored the unified voice across campus calling on them to allow time for faculty, staff and student governance bodies to deliberate about the proposal to create a College of Business”. A member of the student assembly said “the voices of students, faculty and staff have been ignored.” He went on to say that his confidence in shared governance has been shaken. The Faculty Senate, University Assembly and Student Assembly had passed resolutions calling for the vote to be tabled to allow for more discussion. Leaders of the new college hailed the decisions as the right decision. Alumni of the Hotel School, posted expressions of sadness and concern over the future of the School on “Keep Cornell Hotel School Independent” (Acriche, S 2016).

LII. Letter to the Editor from Student Trustee

On February 1, 2016 the graduate student trustee shares her reasons for voting in favor of the creation of the College of Business in a letter to the editor published in the Cornell Daily Sun. She acknowledges that, while she was excited by the possibilities the proposed college present for “students, faculty, staff and the broader University”, she also had concerns about the “seeming lack of constituent input and poor communication of the concept”. She believes that the president and provost have presented a “bold vision to improve undergraduate and graduate business education at Cornell, about which you have and will continue to hear many details”. She called the change visionary and necessary and states her belief that the new college will transform Cornell to the “benefit of our University and its students”(O’Toole 2016).

LIII. Message from Provost to Hotel Alumni

On February 1, 2016 the provost writes to School of Hotel Administration (SHA) alumni to share with them commitments that respond to specific concerns: SHA will continue to be led by its own dean, have its own faculty, manage its own admissions, determine its own curriculum, gifts designated to SHA will continue to benefit the school, Statler Hall will remain home to SHA and “Hotelies” will continue to run their own alumni organizations. He notes that mergers at other universities have resulted in a decrease in the stature of their hospitality programs, but differentiates the effort at Cornell from those changes and calls upon the SHA alumni to work with Cornell to be active participants in the process so that change improves the stature of the school (M. Kotlikoff, internal memorandum, February 1, 2016).

LIV. Provost interviewed by the Cornell Daily Sun

In an interview with the Cornell Daily Sun on February 2, 2016, the provost notes that the need for a college of business has been discussed at Cornell for many years. Citing reports created by faculty in 2009 and the strategic plan of 2010, as well as a white paper in 2013, the provost notes that the deficiencies of the fragmented model of business had been documented in the past. He and the president feel that had they introduced the idea of creating the college of business, yet again, for deliberation, opponents would have stalled its creation. They decided to move forward the creation of the college in two parts. They asked the Board to “enable” the university to begin the process of “creating an empty vessel” by voting to create the new college. The second

part will now take place – which is to have faculty, students, alumni and staff fill that vessel with details of how the college will operate.

The provost expresses surprise about the level of “suspicion” expressed by some who have contacted him and the president. He stated that their intent has always been to preserve the identity and excellence of the schools. The provost noted that the creation of the College of Business is the biggest thing that Cornell has done since Cornell Tech and it is “an affirmation of the importance” of these schools (Alicea 2016).

LV. Cornell announces charges and membership of committees designed to frame the College of Business

In a February 2, 2016 Cornell Chronicle article, the president and provost announce the charges and membership for the seven committees that will work on college “framework”. The committees are:

- Steering Committee – is charged with “ensuring that key issues related to the creation of the college are addressed”
- Faculty Governance Committee – is charged to define “program areas across three schools around common Curricular and scholarly interests”, define roles of program area leaders and school deans, create promotion and tenure guidelines, “define processes for faculty consultation on and governance over major policy issues”, and identify issues that need further “work and deliberation”.
- Alumni Engagement Committee – will “define processes for alumni engagement and communication across the three schools”.

- Staff Synergy Group – will “define processes for coordination of staff governance and management” across the three schools.
- Communications Committee – will “define and oversee communications strategies to engage key internal and external stakeholder groups”
- Undergraduate Student Synergy Group – will identify areas across the three schools for “achieving synergy of student participation”, define processes for student governance, identify areas of risk and next steps
- Graduate Student Synergy Group – will “define areas across the three schools for “achieving synergy of student participation”, define processes for student governance, identify areas of risk and next steps (Kelley 2016).

LVI. [The Cornell Daily Sun reported on the Open Forum of February 2, 2016](#)

About 150 students, many from the School of Hotel Administration, listen to a 30 minute presentation by the provost about the value of creating the College of Business.

Student questions focus on concerns around the weakening of the Hotel school’s ranking, student satisfaction and alumni engagement. Hotel School students walked to the forum together. They acknowledge that creating the College is a “done deal” but one of the organizers explained that they wanted to demonstrate their solidarity and continued concern for the Hotel School. Students from the Hotel School express their concerns at the forum as do students from the Dyson School. One Hotel student notes a concern that the provost’s message seemed contradictory – that there will be changes and improvements and that nothing is going to change. The student noted, “You can’t do both”. The provost acknowledges the concerns expressed by the students and

pointed out that this is why the change had not been made in the past. “It’s hard to get people to look forward and not backward and change is difficult” (Girsky 2016).

LVII. John Dyson approves of the College of Business

On February 5, 2016 the Cornell Daily Sun reports that John Dyson, '65, whose family named the Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the university that keeps the Dyson School a part of the College of Agriculture and Life Science (CALS) as well as a part of the College of Business. The dean of CALS will be involved in all major decisions involving the Dyson School and in the case of a disagreement with the College of Business dean, the matter will be resolved by the provost. Dyson believes that this shared arrangement will create a balanced mission between business and its “traditional agricultural and land grant missions” (Rudolfsky 2016).

LVIII. President announces that she is being treated for colon cancer. She will remain in her role but curtail travel and ask others to take on some of her engagements.

On February 8, 2016, President Garrett announces that she is receiving treatment for colon cancer. She remains in her role but will curtail travel (E. Garrett, internal email, February 8, 2016).

LIX. Graduating students of ILR write a letter to the editor in the Cornell Daily Sun:

Where is ILR?

On February 9, 2016 four graduating ILR students wrote a letter to the editor about the future of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations. Given the integration of the other business programs, the students asked what this will mean for the future of ILR. They worry that ILR will be isolated and that this will potentially impact the quality of students it attracts (Batista et. al 2016).

LX. Provost addresses the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) on College of Business

On February 9, the Cornell Daily Sun reported on the provost's presentation to the GPSA. Students express their concern over the administration's "lack of transparency in the decision-making process" that led to the creation of the College of Business. The provost defends the trustee vote and cited the "multiple past studies" regarding business studies at Cornell. The provost shares that he and the president could not engage publicly on the decision to create the college without having an "avalanche of dissent" (Greenberg 2016).

LXI. The Chairman of the Board responds to the Faculty Senate's resolution to table consideration of creation of the College of Business

On February 9, 2016 Chairman of the Board Robert Harrison responds to Acting Dean of the Faculty noting that, after three hours of deliberation, the Board of Trustees approved the formation of the College of Business. He attaches an advisory memo of

January 15, 2016, provided by university counsel at the request of the chairman that outlines the authority of the board of trustees, president, provost, and faculty. In that memo, the university counsel advises that the board of trustees “has plenary oversight for all colleges of Cornell and is solely responsible for the establishment of the College of Business”.

[LXII. The New York Times reports that the plan to merge the Hotel School gets an “icy” reception](#)

On February 15, 2016 the New York Times reports on the reactions of alumni – particularly those from the School of Hotel Administration (Hotelies) to the decision to create a College of Business. The article focuses first on the upset of alumni at losing the independence of the Hotel School and goes on to criticize the process. The article says that the administration “sprang new of the trustees’ vote on distracted students and faculty in mid-December, during final exams and before the holidays”. The article ends with comments from the provost who notes that the trustee vote authorizes the framework from which the college will be created and a key alumnus who notes that the three schools together will be stronger than they are separately (Foderaro 2016).

[LXIII. The backlash to the decision to establish CCB is noted in the Daily Pennsylvanian on February 15, 2016](#)

The University of Pennsylvania student paper notes the student and alumni opposition to the creation of the college. The article notes that the Cornell College of Business will

rank third in size behind Harvard and Penn's Wharton School of Business (Carballeira 2016).

LXIV. The Faculty Governance Committee issues its first progress report

On February 17, 2016 the Cornell Chronicle reports that the Faculty Governance Committee has issued its first progress report. The report identifies the strength of the faculty in all three schools in cross-disciplinary research, success in connecting business and economics to non-business research, and a commitment to outstanding teaching and research. The report identifies benefits that the committee hopes to derive from “unification”: college level programming for Master of Professional Studies degrees, online and mixed online/residential executive education and non-degree programming; integrated doctoral curriculum and matching of graduate students to teaching assistant opportunities, career services, entrepreneurship; sustainability, and strengthening centers and institutes (Jubas 2016).

LXV. Open Forum is held on February 17, 2016

The Cornell Chronicle reports, in an article on February 19th that at the open forum the provost reviewed the decision to create the college of business and again fielded questions about the process from faculty and staff. The provost referred to past considerations of business education at Cornell and said “ if we had entered into an extended debate with faculty and alumni, it would have been tremendously resisted. And this is why, frankly, previous provosts had decided not to take this step. It is something that is difficult in terms of change. ... Because of this issue, we decided that

we needed to get past ‘no.’ We needed the board to enable this process,” The provost stressed that faculty will “make all decisions regarding academic issues” (Kelley 2016).

LXVI. The Chairman of the Board announces that the president has undergone surgery and while she is recovering, the provost will become acting president

On February 19, 2016, the chairman of the board writes to the Cornell community to say that the president has undergone surgery related to her illness and “to ensure continuity of leadership”, she has delegated the duties and powers of the presidency to the provost (R. Harrison, internal email, February 19, 2016).

LXVII. On March 4, 2016 the Cornell Daily Sun reported that the Hotel School was ranked the best hospitality and hotel management school in the world for 2015 by CEOWorld Magazine

The ranking was based on a survey sent to 18,000 hospitality recruiters and managers of luxury hotels around the world (Keller 2016).

LXVIII. The Faculty Senate draft a resolution to censure the university central administration and board of trustees

A resolution signed by 67 faculty is drafted to censure the university central administration and board of trustees for failing to consult with the faculty, student, and staff governance bodies prior to creating a new Cornell College of Business. The resolution points to the authority of the faculty to consider matters of educational policy, as outlined in Article XII of the Cornell Bylaws The resolution also states that the

administration did not comply with the “Principles of Cooperation and Consultation Between the President and Faculty Senate” that were adopted in 2000, which provide that the university administration will not make final conclusions on major multi-college educational policy issues until “normal steps for securing faculty input have been completed”. The resolution also refers to the resolutions of the Faculty Senate, Student and University Assemblies that call upon the Board to delay the vote. The resolution states that the Faculty Senate should take actions that support the interests of all members of the Cornell community – faculty, students, staff and alumni – to participate in discussions that would make significant changes in Cornell’s academic programs (Lieberwitz et. al 2016).

The provost responds to the resolution, which is scheduled to be considered on March 9 at a Faculty Senate meeting, while he will be out of town. He offers, as an alternative, to be available at the Faculty Senate meeting on April 13, should the Faculty Senate find it useful to have the Acting President in attendance prior to the vote (M. Kotlikoff, internal letter, March 9, 2016).

[LXIX. Chairman of the Board informs the Cornell community that President Garrett has died.](#)

On March 7, 2016 the Chairman of the board informs the Cornell community that the president died the evening before from colon cancer. She had served in the role for 8 months. Provost Mike Kotlikoff will continue to serve as Acting President.

That same day Acting Dean of the University Faculty informs the faculty that the sponsors of the censure resolution withdrew the resolution from the upcoming Faculty

Senate meeting and will consider how to proceed in the future (R. Harrison, internal memorandum, March 7, 2016).

LXX. School of Hotel Administration Dean steps down to accept new position as provost at Babson College

On March 11, 2016 the dean announces to alumni and students that he has accepted a new position as provost of Babson College. He stresses that this decision is unrelated to the College of Business decision.

LXXI. Open forum on March 22, 2016 focuses on students in Dyson

On March 24, 2016 the Cornell Chronicle reports on the open forum held on March 22, 2016 in Warren Hall, open to all students and led by the deputy provost for the College of Business. According to the Cornell Daily Sun report on March 25, the questions of the students focus mostly on how the College of Business will benefit Dyson students. This includes a discussion of topics such as enhanced career services, cross listing classes and timing classes to reduce scheduling conflicts (Kelley 2016).

LXXII. Dean of External Relations says that student experience will not change in the short run

In the Cornell Daily Sun on May 9, 2016 the dean of External Relations for the College of Business, says that despite the changes, most aspects of the student experience will not change in the short run. In the same article a member of the undergraduate student committee credits the provost for doing a “fast and efficient job” of filling the empty

vessel and notes that withholding support for the College of Business at this point will not help the students, faculty and staff preparing for the implementation of the plan (Girsky 2016).

LXXIII. An open forum is held on May 10 to discuss the final committee reports of the 7 committees

The Cornell Chronicle reports that the provost, dean and deputy dean of the college of business were in attendance at the open forum. The dean of the College of Business opened the session and focused his remarks on student success. The deputy dean focused his comments on preserving the distinct faculty programs of the three schools. The deputy provost was quoted as saying “By maintaining three distinct schools, each housing its own faculty, we maintain the strong Cornell tradition of a really close-knit community of students and faculty. That’s one of the hallmarks of business education at Cornell.”

The report recommendations from each committee are reviewed at the open forum. The Faculty Governance Committee recommends that the college be organized by school, disciplinary area and multidisciplinary themes and each school retain tenure homes in primary academic units. Student groups from the schools have assisted the student synergy groups in determining how to approach student and career services and student governance. Students expressed a desire for consistency in classes, priority access across the schools additional majors and other opportunities. The student synergy group report recommends that each school maintain its own admissions processes, based in their own buildings (Kelley 2016).

LXXIV. David Breazzano's gift of \$25 million dollars supports the new MBA center in Collegetown.

On May 16, 2016 the Cornell Chronicle reports that Breazzano's gift will support a six story classroom and office building being built in Collegetown. The interim president noted Breazzano's gift will "enhance the quality and capacity of our business programs. The dean of the college of business is quoted as saying "He has supported greater collaboration among schools at Cornell and believes the synergies that will result from the Cornell College of Business will benefit all" (Endresen 2016).

LXXV. Deans are appointed in Hotel, Dyson and Johnson

On May 20, 2016 the Cornell Chronicle reported that associate professor Kate Walsh had been appointed as interim dean of the School of Hotel Administration for two years, reporting to the Dean of the College of Business (Kelley 2016). This appointment was made after consultation with the faculty of the Hotel School. On June 7, 2016 it was reported that professor Mark Nelson was named Dean of Johnson Graduate School of Management effective July 1, 2016, also reporting to the dean of the College of Business. Nelson's appointment came upon the recommendation of the faculty (Kelley 2016). On June 21, 2016 Professor Ed McLaughlin was designated interim dean of the Dyson School effective July 1, while a search begins to identify an ongoing dean. He will report jointly to the dean of the College of Business and the Dean of CALS (Kelley 2016).

LXXVI. The College of Business officially launches on July 1, 2016

The dean of the College of Business wrote an email to the faculty and staff of the college on July 1 to formally announce the launch of the college. “The leadership team is in place and work continues to brand the college.” A CCB advisory council of alumni will be established in the fall to complement existing alumni councils in the three schools (S. Dutta, internal email, July 1,2016).

Observations and Analysis - Cornell College of Business

The process used to establish the Cornell College of Business (CCB) is observed and analyzed relative to the guidance provided by Larry Hirschhorn (1994) to leaders of loosely coupled organizations. Hirschhorn advised leaders to respect the characteristics of the organization, including its semi-autonomous nature of its units; to protect and guide the organization through changes by advancing strategic themes through a careful planning framework; and to focus on changes that occur “between the seams” of the organization’s units (1994 p.2).

Align change plans with characteristics of the university and acknowledge the semi-autonomous status of units of the university

Cornell University has a history of self-governance, involving faculty, students, and staff in the consideration of planned changes. Over the last two decades, faculty, through the Faculty Senate, have expressed concern over the lack of early involvement when changes are being considered by the leaders. Despite these past concerns, faculty expect to be consulted when changes impact academic activities. The process

employed to create the Cornell College of Business (CCB) did not follow traditional university practices of involving the faculty prior to final decisions. The December 14, 2015 memo (M. Kotlikoff, internal memorandum, December 14, 2016) by the provost announced the plan to seek Board of Trustee approval on January 30, 2016 to create the new college and was sent on the Monday after the December 10, 2015 Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees meeting. The memorandum does not mention the Executive Committee meeting or the involvement of the trustees or anyone else in the planning for this change. It is unclear whether board members were aware of the intention to seek approval to create the new college prior to the December 10, 2015 Executive Committee meeting. At a minimum, it appears that the president, provost, and perhaps the new dean, informed the Executive Committee at that time.

The Board of Trustees has supreme authority to govern the university according to the university's bylaws (Cornell University ByLaws, Article II). It then delegates certain powers to the university administration to operate the university (Cornell University Bylaws, Articles V, VI, VII, VIII, X) and to the university faculty for educational policy (Cornell University Bylaws, Article XIII). The authority provided by the University Bylaws were relied upon heavily to create the College of Business.

The administration requested that the Board of Trustees change the Bylaws of the university to create the College of Business as the first action in the process of merging the School of Hotel Administration, Johnson Graduate School of Management and Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management. The powers of the Board of

Trustees outlined in Article II of the Bylaws of the University give the board “supreme control over the University, including every college, school, and academic department, division and center thereof.”

The Board of Trustees has the authority to make the decision and the university leaders, by requesting that they do so, used this authority relationship to advance the change. Faculty, students and alumni reacted to this action occurring prior to their knowledge or involvement.

The action by the Board of Trustees preceded the involvement of others on the campus. Other conversations that may have taken place, and that may have impacted the timing or result, did not happen in advance of the December announcement to campus. The provost, in an interview on February 9, 2016 explained that the decision was made to establish the college as an “empty vessel” and that once that was accomplished, the faculty, staff and alumni would work with leaders to fill in the details about how the college will operate (Greenberg 2016). What is left to decide is how the college will operate, not whether the schools will form into a college. This change process did not align with past practices or expectations of members of the university community.

Fundamentally, the creation of the College of Business (CCB) brings three schools that had been independent into a single structure. The language used to describe this change varied and it is unclear the extent to which the schools will be tightly or loosely coupled under the new structure. In the initial announcement that was sent out on

December 14, 2015 by the provost to the faculty, students and staff in College of Agriculture and Life Science, School of Hotel Administration and Johnson Graduate School of Management, the provost stated the intention to establish a “single, unified College of Business”. In the same memo the new administration of the CCB begins to take shape with a dean and deputy dean named. The school deans are described as “presiding over” each school’s academic programs. In this initial description of the CCB, these three schools are described in a way that indicates very tight coupling between the schools and a strong authority from the College of Business over the schools (M. Kotlikoff, internal memorandum, December 14, 2015).

That same day the provost announced the intention to create a single, unified college, another university official, in a Cornell Daily Sun article, stressed the intention for each school to “maintain its unique identity and mission”, and indicating instead that the CCB would build upon the strong stature of each school by “its combination with faculty, curricular offerings and programs in a cohesive College of Business”(Silver 2015). A subsequent communication from the president and provost on December 21. 2015 (Garrett, E, Kotlikoff, M 2015) indicated that they will be seeking campus community feedback as to the “benefits of integration” while “maintaining the individual strengths and special character of the programs” are realized. In January the president and provost state their intention to maintain the “brand of each school, while addressing the fragmented nature of business education at Cornell” (Garrett, E, Kotlikoff, M 2016). These messages indicate the possibility of looser coupling of the schools to one another, and to CCB.

The decision to bring three previously independent schools together under a single college moves those structures – and the faculty within them – from very loose relationships between the schools and the faculty in them into a different relationship. Schools have significant independence in hiring decisions, organizational frameworks and budgetary choices. Blending the three schools into a single college calls into question what will remain uniquely decided at each school and what will be coordinated or decided at the college level.

The organizational design of the new college continued to emerge throughout the remainder of the fiscal year. The deans of each school were announced and area coordinators were named for seven academic areas. Area coordinators will “work to enhance the academic stature of their academic areas, manage teaching assignment coordination and quality control, oversee curriculum standards and coordinate scholarly community activities, among other duties” (Kelley 2016). The roles of the area coordinators and the school deans are significant to the determining the tightness of coupling between the schools and to the college. Strong roles for the area coordinators indicate a tighter coupling and more singular nature to the college, strong roles for the school deans would indicate a looser coupling between the schools and perhaps, to CCB. On July 1, 2016 the College of Business was officially launched.

The strength of coupling between the schools and to the college was addressed by the Faculty Governance Committee, which launched on January 12, 2016 and completed

its work on May 12, 2016. The Faculty Governance Committee was chaired by the deputy provost and the new deputy dean of CCB. Its members included faculty from the three impacted schools. The committee members identified four foundational principles in determining the governance of the college (CCB) - maintenance of the distinct missions of its three Schools; maintain the expectations that existing faculty have been hired to fulfill in support of their School's distinct mission; encourage and facilitate cohesion across the CCB, through integration of its faculties and coordinated use of its resources, and: encourage and facilitate fair decision processes and fair outcomes, through broad inclusion of informed views and as much transparency as is possible given the sensitive nature of the matters under discussion (Charge and Membership of College of Business Committees 2016).

The committee's final report recommended that the college organize in three ways – by school, by area and by theme. The areas have since been agreed upon and announced. The themes, as outlined in the report were envisioned to be “multi-disciplinary, dynamic and flexible”. Tenure and promotion considerations will flow up through the school to the college and finally up to the university, ending with the board for final approval. This design structure represents multiple layers of coupling. If the intention is to design and manage all three of these structures, this will be a tightly coupled system. The school and college structures are tightly coupled structures and adding the college over top of the schools adds a layer of administrative oversight. In the tenure and promotion process, the additional layer of involvement of the college may or may not add significant tightening to relationship of the college to the hiring of

faculty. The role of the university administration and the board of trustees in the tenure and promotion process will not change. There does not appear to be new opportunities for cross-system coupling in this new design. The process did not assume the semi-autonomous nature of the three schools. Rather, it advanced a new design that would create a new organization that would serve as the umbrella unit for all three schools.

Protect the system by keeping it within its safety zone and managing its contradictions and guide the system by developing strategic themes and building a planning framework

The decision to bring the three schools together under a single college represented a significant change in the university's organizational structure. Advancing the proposal to make this change directly to the trustees, prior to campus involvement was a departure from past involvement strategies. Some students, alumni and faculty, particularly of the Hotel School – a unit that had high autonomy prior to its inclusion in the College of Business – voiced concerns about the creation of CCB. They worried that the change would result in a loss of stature for the college. Others expressed concern about the process that was used and its lack of transparency and failure to respect the views of those on campus and in the alumni community. The concerns about process indicate that leaders did not keep the organization in its safety zone, nor did they use a process for moving from the strategic theme to a more specific proposal that created meaningful opportunities for involvement.

Almost immediately some alumni of the School of Hotel Administration began to express concerns over this tighter coupling with Dyson and Johnson. Their efforts to stop the formation of CCB included the creation of a Facebook page ('Keep The Cornell Hotel School Independent' 2015) called "Keep the Cornell Hotel School Independent". Their main concern centered around the coupling of the Hotel School, a top ranked school in its field, with schools with a pure business focus that are ranked less highly. Those expressing concerns did not see advantages to the Hotel School in the merger, instead they saw a loss of independence that to some, signaled the end of their alma mater.

Three alumni of the School of Hotel Administration, two of whom serve as trustees on the board, wrote to alumni of the school in an open letter entitled "Why We Support the Creation of the College of Business at Cornell University" (B. Alter, L. Pillsbury, A. Tisch, undated letter). In it, they shared their views about why moving the school into the College of Business will be beneficial for the school. Because of their positions as trustees they had an authority-based role at the university and in that role had the authority to make the decision about creating the college. They are also alumni of the school and in the open letter they shared the views they have that will inform their votes as trustees. They approached the decision first as trustees, rather than as alumni.

Two alumni who had made substantial donations to the university shared their concerns about the creation of the College of Business with the student newspaper. In his letter, printed in the Cornell Daily Sun on January 29, 2016 (Rudolfsky 2016), John Dyson,

whose family gave the naming gift for the Charles A. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, expressed his concern about the process used by university leaders. As a former trustee, he identified steps that were skipped including moving the issue directly to the full board before it was considered at a committee of the board and “before the merits of the proposal are fully vetted by all constituencies, including the affected Schools, Departments, Faculty, Employees, Alumni and Students.”

In the same Cornell Daily Sun article a letter from School of Hotel Administration alumni Charles “Chuck” Feeney was printed (Rudolfsky 2016). In it, he expressed his support for a “strong and independent Hotel School with an equally strong and independent dean at its helm”. Mr. Feeney, whose letter was written to the president and Board of Trustees, did not believe that a decision was appropriate until additional study of “potential outcomes have been carefully reviewed”.

Both alumni point to the importance of moving judiciously through known processes, keeping the university within its safety zone as changes are contemplated.

The way in which the president and provost approached the creation of the Cornell College of Business, potentially redefined the way in which changes will be advanced at the university. The faculty might say that they determine what they consult on in the domain of academic curriculum and that the University Bylaws clearly gives them this authority. The decision to first set up the college and then consult the faculty on what

happens after that contours the role of faculty participation by creating the parameters within which they will consider those academic matters. The initial proposal to establish the Cornell College of Business did not move a strategic theme towards a specific recommendation using a process that involved the faculty.

The comment by the provost in February 2, that “opponents would have stalled its creation”, indicates a reluctance to begin consultation before the decision was made to create the college (Girsky 2016). As Weick (1976) indicated, the decision to wait to begin coupling across the systems impacted the connection between them during the early days of the establishment of the CCB.

The Faculty Senate, the university faculty’s shared governance body, having not been consulted in advance of the request to establish the CCB, passed a resolution on December 16, 2016 calling on the Board of Trustees to table consideration of creation of the College of Business until the Faculty Senate had time to deliberate on the proposal.

The faculty have authority “to consider questions of educational policy which concern more than one college, school or separate academic unit.” (Cornell University Bylaws, 2016, Article XII)

The faculty did not specifically structure the resolution based upon their authority under Article XIII of the Cornell University By-laws. Rather, they generally called upon the

trustees to permit them time to consider the proposal. In so doing they invoked their role, both as the faculty responsible for educational policy and as the faculty senate responsible for matters of educational policy. They sought to create a connection between the system involving the faculty and the administrative and governance system. Their efforts were an attempt to create a process of involvement that would give them a voice in the process prior to the decision to establish the new college. The chairman of the board declined to engage with the Faculty Senate prior to the trustee vote.

The effort of the faculty to reach out to the board was consistent with their view of the role of faculty in considering university changes. The authority that the faculty has under the University Bylaws for educational policy is a matter of some debate between the Faculty Senate and the University administration. In May 2000, the Faculty Senate passed a resolution “Principles of Cooperation and Consultation Between the President and Faculty Senate” (2000) in which, upon other measures, the following was stated:

To that end, the President or other members of the Administration will not reach final conclusions or take action on major multi-college educational policy issues until the normal steps for securing faculty input, including a reasonable period for relevant Faculty Senate Committees to act and for subsequent deliberations by the Faculty Senate to occur, have been completed (2000, p.3).

In March 2007, the Faculty Senate issued a final report and recommendations entitled “Faculty Senate Committee to Review Faculty Governance”. In it, they point to the agreements made in May 2000, noting that the “problem of a lack of early and adequate consultation has persisted.” The report includes numerous recommendations aimed at

increasing faculty involvement in decision-making at the university, all of which were designed to increase the inclusion of faculty at the *early stages* of change consideration (2007 p.9).

Adherence to the recommendations in these reports relies on the agreement of the parties that the role of the faculty includes involvement in early-stage discussions. This role is not one that is necessarily prescribed in the University Bylaws. Rather, involvement of the faculty in early stage contemplation of changes is an important element to keeping the organization connected (Weick, 1976). These early stage interactions may also increase transparency and trust between these systems within the university. As Hirschhorn suggested, these involvement strategies are employed by leaders to move a strategic theme through a loosely coupled organization more effectively.

van den Bos and Lind suggest that when people do not know whether or not to trust those in positions of authority, they will consider the decisions of those leaders based on their perceptions of the fairness of the process (2002, p.43). This may be especially important when considering the decisions surrounding the creation of the Cornell College of Business. The president and provost were new to their positions in July 2015. The president was new to the university and not yet known to many people on the campus when the announcement was made on December 14, 2015 (M. Kotlikoff, internal memorandum, December 14, 2015). The provost, when asked why there was no campus conversation prior to seeking Board of Trustee approval, indicated in an

interview reported in the Cornell Daily Sun on February 2, 2016 (Girsky 2016) that faculty had already considered consolidation of business programs in the past and that further campus conversations would stall progress. This answer indicates that the past involvement of faculty, and the process used to collect it, was sufficient to inform the decision that was made. It is, therefore, instructive to review the process and content of the actions in 2009 and 2010.

The report of Management Education Task Force on Management Education in 2009 and the 2010 university strategic plan were both faculty-led processes. The Management Education Task Force was one of seven specific task forces set up in 2009 as part of a plan to “reimagine” the university. The committee members were charged by the then-provost to explore how academic units that teach management or business might be grouped within a business school structure. The provost directed the task force to seek input and participation from relevant constituencies. He went on in this charge to say “This need for transparency must be balanced against the need to be expeditious, efficient, and capable of making hard decisions. It is inevitable that some recommendations will be unpopular with some constituencies, but if Cornell is to enhance its prominence in the social sciences, this task force cannot allow a desire to avoid conflict deter it from making bold recommendations.” (Fuchs, 2009)

The College of Business design that was implemented – to combine the schools of Hotel Administration, Dyson and Johnson – into a single College of Business was not specifically recommended in the report of the 2009 Management Education Task Force.

The task force did indicate that change was needed in how business education is delivered on campus and they offered three restructuring options for consideration. The first was to combine the undergraduate business (now the Dyson School) into the Johnson Graduate School of Management. The second option was to combine portions of the undergraduate business program, the School of Industrial and Labor Relations together with the department of Policy, Analysis and Planning from the College of Human Ecology to form undergraduate School of Management and Public Policy. The final restructuring option that the committee recommended was to create a Division of Undergraduate Business. Under this model “Students would be applicants to both to a department or college and to the Division (as is presently done with the Graduate School). Admissions and placement could be centralized, increasing coordination and reducing the costs associated with duplicate efforts. Colleges and Schools would contribute funds presently spent on these activities and share on pro-rated basis in savings.” (Seeber et al. 2009, page 2)

The provost responded to Management Task Force on December 8, 2009 by stating: “Building on the management sciences task force report and the additional studies requested from CALS/AEM and SHA, the Dean of the Johnson School will take lead responsibility for developing, in conjunction with CALS/AEM and SHA, a detailed plan for improving the quality and impact of management sciences and business education and scholarship at Cornell. This will include careful review of the appropriate degree of integration of the three units. This plan will also include consideration of management

courses and programs in other units, including CHE/PAM, Engineering and ILR” (Fuchs 2009).

The 2010 Strategic Plan is also cited as a faculty-led initiative that called for change to the way in which business is organized at Cornell. The strategic planning committee was chaired by a tenured faculty member and included a number of faculty. The strategic plan refers to business education in *Excellence in Research, Scholarship and Creativity*, Objective 2, Action B, (SPAC, 2010 p.26) where it states:

Consider more formal cross-college structures of coordination (e.g., steering committees, shared departments, super-departments, mergers) in disciplines or fields where these would significantly enhance academic excellence and reputation and/or improve the utilization of faculty resources.

This is the only reference to business education in the strategic plan.

Restructuring business education was considered in the Management Education Report. The provost at the time charged the Dean of the Johnson School with creating a “detailed plan for improving the quality and impact of management sciences and business education and scholarship at Cornell” (Fuchs, 2009).

On December 2, 2009 the provost and members of the Management Education Task Force held an open forum with interested faculty and staff. In response to a question during the session, the provost was quoted as saying ““My rule No. 1 is not to break something that works,” he said. The challenge is, “how can we make

management sciences stronger today and in the future, and how do we do it in an era of constrained resources?” (Doolittle 2009).

There are no articles or online references to the process that occurred after the provost charged the Dean of the Johnson School to create a detailed plan. There does not appear to have been broad community consideration of the detailed plan. The provost, when explaining why the decision to establish the Cornell College of Business was made without further faculty involvement, referred to faculty involvement in the Management Task Force 2009, and the open discussions of the report, as sufficient. Returning to the research of van den Bos and Lind, the process used in 2009 was communicated to the campus and one that may have been perceived by faculty as fair (2002 p. 44). However, there appears to have been no follow-up with the community after the dean was charged with developing a detailed plan. Referring to that process may not increase the faculty’s sense of fairness in the new process or increase trust in the leadership. This is not likely to improve communication between the faculty system and the administrative system of the university.

Make change “at the seams” between units of the university and boost synergistic combinations.

Hirschhorn’s (1994) recommends that leaders of loosely coupled organizations should pursue growth “at the seams” between existing units to create more specialized parts

and combine old parts to take on a new shape so that the resulting organization is larger in size.

The creation of the Cornell College of Business (CCB) was not “at the seams” between existing units. Instead it redefined the seams between three schools. Based on the publicly available information, the level of connection between those schools and to the college is still evolving. What is known is that the connections will be different after the creation of CCB. According to the initial announcement (M. Kotlikoff, internal memorandum, December 14, 2015), creating the CCB will give students more opportunities to connect or couple across disciplines and encourage more cross-discipline research by faculty. These new opportunities to couple across the schools may create more specialized parts within CCB. The role of the area coordinators may create cross-school specialization in discharging their roles “to enhance the academic stature of their academic areas”. The CCB leaders have stated the intention to organize the college by “school, disciplinary area and multidisciplinary themes.” This organizational design may combine old parts into a new shape.

The Cornell College of Business is in its nascent stages so it is difficult to know whether the resulting organization will be larger in overall size. At a minimum, there will be additional infrastructure associated with the CCB, as a dean, a deputy dean, and area coordinators have been hired. The public announcements did not indicate that the new structure would result in the admission of new students.

CHAPTER 5

KEY FINDINGS FROM CASE STUDIES

“Leaders of loosely coupled or federated systems can plan for their future, but the plans they develop, the frameworks they use, the planning processes they deploy, must all fit the characteristics of the institution they lead. Recent experience suggests that planning consists of both protecting and guiding the system while acknowledging the semi-autonomous status of its component units. To protect the system, the executive keeps the system within its safety zone and manages its contradictions; to guide the system the executive develops strategic themes, builds a planning infrastructure and works at the “seams” between units, giving a boost to emerging synergistic combinations. (Hirschhorn, page 2)”

A review of the two case studies of changes at Cornell University – the creation of Cornell NYC Tech and the establishment of the Cornell College of Business (CCB) – indicate that leaders employed different approaches to advancing the changes and that the different approaches may have had an impact on campus and alumni reactions in the early stages of these changes. In both cases these changes were initiated and managed by administrative leaders of the university. The process by which these leaders aligned these change plans with the characteristics of the university, including the semi-autonomous status of the colleges and units; protected these characteristics; advanced the change through a process that involved students, faculty and alumni; and worked “at the seams” between the units; all appear to have impacted how the change was perceived.

The approach of the leaders to these changes also indicated different appreciations of the loosely coupled nature of the academic systems of the university and the need to advance changes considerate of the nature of the university. The leaders who

advanced the establishment of Cornell NYC Tech moved the proposal for the new campus through the university in under the deadlines created by the city of New York. They did not seek permission or approval of the faculty to pursue the possibility. However, they engaged the Faculty Senate early, seeking out their advice on the structure and design of the new campus in advance of the submission of a proposal. The final application from Cornell reflected the recommendations of the faculty. The leaders demonstrated an understanding of the importance of identifying the opportunity “at the seams” of the current units of the university, identifying the new applied science campus as one that will create “synergistic combinations” between existing academic units of the university and the New York City business community.

The leaders who advanced the creation of the Cornell College of Business advanced the plan to unite the three schools with less focus on keeping “the system within its safety zone and manages its contradictions” as Hirschhorn has suggested. They chose to announce the intention to create the CCB publicly and to seek approval from the Board of Trustees in advance of involvement or consideration by the Faculty Senate. The change moves three distinct schools under a predetermined college leadership team that stated their intention to “unify” them under a single college. The change was not “at the seams” of these units, but rather changed the “seams” in significant ways.

In addition to these differences in how the changes were advanced by university leaders, other factors appear to have influenced their early stage developments.

Geography

The location of the new organizations may also be a factor in the response of faculty, students, and alumni to the proposed changes. Cornell NYC Tech is located in New York City, while the Cornell College of Business is located on the main campus in Ithaca, New York.

Cornell NYC Tech was developed in response to the request for proposal by the city of New York to advance the economy of the city. It is an applied science campus aimed at supporting businesses and the economy of New York City. While the design tethers the new campus back to the Ithaca campus because the faculty are all tenured in Ithaca academic departments and the entire campus reports through the Ithaca provost, it is geographically removed from the main campus. This has caused some concern about the extent to which it will draw resources away from Ithaca. Overall, however, the distance from the new campus and the lack of actual impact on the Ithaca campus during the early stages of development meant that the change impacted very few current faculty and staff. Overall, students and alumni, many of whom were either from New York City or work there, were positively inclined towards the establishment of the new campus.

Cornell College of Business is being established on the main campus in Ithaca, by unifying Cornell's three accredited business schools - Johnson Graduate School of Management, the Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, and the School of Hotel Administration into the College of Business (CCB). This change is

impacting several hundred currently employed faculty and staff, many of whom know others who are employed in other units at Cornell. The impacts of the change – and how it was made – were discussed on the campus and in the local community throughout the early stages of the change.

Faculty engagement, timing and transparency of communications

Faculty were engaged differently in the change processes related to the creation of Cornell NYC Tech and the establishment of the College of Business. In creating Cornell NYC Tech, the provost involved the faculty, through the Faculty Senate, in the plan and structural design, prior to submission of the proposal to the city of New York. The president and provost decided to establish the Cornell College of Business without faculty involvement. They named the top leaders of the new college without faculty involvement. Faculty were brought into the process after the college was established and the leaders were named through the establishment of a faculty committee that focused on governance considerations.

The provost sought early input of a committee (CAPP) of the Faculty Senate in the design of governance structure of Cornell NYC Tech. They presented three options to the provost and recommended the one that was included in the proposal that was submitted to the state. Some faculty later complained that they were not afforded the opportunity to consider partnering with the Technion in developing the campus. Once created, the structure of Cornell NYC Tech followed the recommendation of the Faculty Senate, namely that Cornell NYC Tech faculty are full members of an Ithaca-

based academic department while also being members of the local academic Cornell NYC Tech campus community. This structure does not increase administrative oversight of the faculty/student relationship. Leaders advanced the change in a manner that recognized the characteristics of the university and retained the semi-autonomous nature of its colleges and units.

The process used to create the proposal for Cornell Tech stands in contrast to the one used to establish the Cornell College of Business. The president and provost did not seek input from the Faculty Senate prior to seeking Board of Trustee approval to establish the Cornell College of Business. The Faculty Senate, through a formal resolution (College of Business Resolution 2016) asked the Board of Trustees to give them additional time to consider the proposal. Their request was denied and the Board of Trustees voted to establish the new college before the Faculty Senate had an opportunity to opine. The president and provost stated that their intention was to involve faculty in how the college would be structured once it was established. Once the board had voted to establish the Cornell College of Business, they created a faculty governance committee to develop the organizational and procedural parameters of the new college.

The structures of CCB that include school deans, area coordinators and college leadership are significant in that they sit atop the faculty/student relationship. They are not loose in their construct and they may represent additional oversight over the faculty/student relationship. In loosely coupled organizations, these constructs are kept

to a minimum to encourage coupling and decoupling that is organic and based on needs as determined by the academic community. The pre-design of a college, schools, areas, and themes will set in place organizational constructs that – if they last – will tighten the coupling between the schools and with the college and couple reduce the independence of faculty to manage their scholarship.

Open sharing of information about the changes, including information about who is involved and the process being used to make decisions, is an important element of the change process. In loosely coupled organizations, clear and timely communication about the pending changes gives impacted parties an opportunity to connect with the decision makers and provide input in the process. This is especially important when changes being contemplated potentially threaten the “semi-autonomous status of its component units” as Hirschhorn (1994 p.2) suggests. Both changes – the creation of Cornell NYC Tech and the establishment of the Cornell College of Business - were advanced by university leadership and each impacted semi-autonomous units of the university. These changes were considered privately by a small group of administrators before the plans were shared more publicly. The plans for Cornell NYC Tech were shared early, however the decision to compete to build the campus had already been made when information about the process was shared. The intention to compete to construct an applied science campus in New York City was shared publicly in March, three months after the request for expressions of interest was made and seven months before the formal proposal was due (Cornell expresses interest to NYC in creating a tech campus 2011).

The proposal to create the Cornell College of Business was made public in mid-December, approximately 6 weeks in advance of a Board of Trustees vote to approve the new college. The intention to create the new college was stated clearly when the proposal was shared in December. The process by which this decision was made was not shared. The president and provost explained, in writing and at open forums, the reasons they were advancing the change.

The establishment of Cornell NYC Tech was heavily publicized in advance of the proposal submission. In the seven months preceding the proposal submission, Faculty Senate was consulted and their advice sought in the development of the new campus design. The framers of the proposal included the provost and two deans who were interviewed on multiple occasions and spoke at several public events.

The provost and CCB dean held several open forums in the 6 weeks between the announcement of the plan to establish the college and the trustee vote. The provost attended several meetings of shared governance assembly meetings and was interviewed by the student newspaper.

In both cases, after the plan was made public, the leaders made themselves available to media and to student, faculty and alumni questions. They responded to questions and concerns. In the case of Cornell NYC Tech, the response of alumni and students was generally positive and supportive of the plan. Faculty were brought into the planning and responded with specific suggestions regarding the proposal. The proposal

to create the Cornell College of Business met with mixed reviews and significant concerns as expressed by some alumni. Faculty were particularly concerned about the lack of their involvement in advance of the proposed vote by the board.

A primary difference in the processes used to advance these changes appeared to be in timing. Both changes were made public after the initial decision to proceed had been made. In the case of Cornell NYC Tech, there was significantly more time between sharing the initial plans and the final submission, 7 months, than there was between the announcement of intention to create the Cornell College of Business and the trustee vote, 6 weeks. The campus and alumni community had more time to consider, and be part of, the plans to create Cornell NYC Tech than they did to weigh in on the creation of the Cornell College of Business. The time between making the intention public and the actual decisions to proceed appears to be a significant factor in how members of the community responded to the proposals.

Alumni sentiments

Alumni connections to the university are primarily through the college from which they graduated, or to a specific program with which they were engaged. Changes that impact the college or program with which they affiliate will be important to them and some will want to be involved in the plans for those changes. Those who donate time or money to those programs may have particular interest in changes that impact them.

Cornell NYC Tech is a new program that builds from several colleges of Cornell. It has few alumni of its own. Alumni of Cornell who are from New York City or who live and work there became engaged in the proposal process by posting, and later delivering to the mayor, a petition in support of Cornell's bid to build the new applied science campus. The petition garnered more than 20,000 supporters, most were either students or alumni (Cornellians for NYC's Tech Campus 2011). Cornell NYC Tech began with strong alumni engagement.

The establishment of the Cornell College of Business provoked strong reactions by some alumni. While some prominent alumni came out in support of the plan, many others, particularly alumni from the School of Hotel Administration (SHA), expressed their concerns about the change. Alumni from SHA created a Facebook page named Keep Cornell Hotel School Independent. They created a petition against including the Hotel School in the new College of Business that garnered several hundred signatures. Prominent alumni, including philanthropist Charles Feeney who donated 350 million dollars to Cornell NYC Tech, and John Dyson whose family named the Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management expressed concerns about the proposed change and the lack of due process in considering the change. Despite these concerns, the Board of Trustees voted to establish the college in January 2016. Since then administrative leaders worked with concerned alumni to address their concerns.

The future of the university's relationships with current and future alumni will rely on ability of the university's leaders to create a compelling reason for alumni to connect

with and care about the College of Business. Past alumni did not graduate from the College of Business, so they will not affiliate with it or have a loyalty to it. The design of the college is complex, in part because it attempts to retain the school identities and create a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts so that, in the future alumni will identify with, engage with, and donate to, the college. The opportunity to create a relationship of alumni with the College of Business rests with creating a meaningful identity at the College level. However, at the same time, other alumni will want assurances that their own schools are not diminished.

CHAPTER 6

CONSIDERATIONS FOR LEADERS OF LOOSELY COUPLED ORGANIZATIONS

The review of two changes that were advanced very differently at the same loosely coupled university yields some observations that may be helpful to other leaders of loosely coupled organizations. Five of these observations are highlighted below.

The process becomes the focus – Leaders responsible for the establishment of Cornell College of Business pointed to the time consuming nature of involvement strategies employed prior to advancing a change. Involvement in advance of determining the precise direction a change will take leaves open the prospect that resistance will form and no acceptable alternative to the status quo will be identified. This is a risk for leaders committed to guiding and protecting the organization during the change process. Yet, failure to engage the community in moving the idea from a strategic theme to a concrete proposal for change may result in spending more time after the change is announced responding to concerns of stakeholders about the process itself. They may focus on the failure to include them in the process and their attention may be drawn away from the advantages of the change itself. The time and resources that should be spent advancing proper execution of the change are then delayed while leaders respond to the criticism of the change process.

Unintended disruptions – When changes are implemented in a loosely coupled organization that extend beyond the seams between the semi-autonomous units, there

may be unintended disruptions within the units that are affected by the change and within other units as well. Stakeholders may be significantly disturbed by their lack of engagement in the process such that they lose focus on their primary responsibilities. Their effort to correct the process, or point out issues of concern may disrupt their work, and negatively impact their sense of connectedness to the organization's leaders.

Degradation of trust within the community – When the process does not engage stakeholders and is seen as intrusive in the loosely coupled organization's semi-autonomous units, loss of trust in the organization's leaders may rise. This can lead to a heightened sense of concern, particularly when changes are unveiled with little or no advance involvement. This may result in a loss of trust in the organization's leaders and may extend beyond those in the impacted units. Stakeholders in other units may react by with suspicion in leadership intentions and may be less likely to engage with them on other issues that arise. They may view future planned changes – even those that include genuine efforts engage them in contouring the plan – with suspicion and may withhold their full participation. Those who are asked to participate in planning a change may worry that being associated with the organization's leaders will accrue negatively to them if the community has a poor impression of the leadership's past actions. In a loosely coupled organization, changes generated at the organizational level are often regarded with suspicion within the semi-autonomous units. Leaders who advance a change with little regard for the characteristics of the organization may face longer term fallout for their decision, impacting future plans and actions.

Faculty independence - The American Association of University Professors holds that: “Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition.” (‘1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure’ 2017)

The independence of faculty from undue pressure or potential repercussions because of their academic inquiry is fundamental to the primary mission of higher education.

Faculty resistance to changes that are imposed from administrative leaders, even changes that may seem to have little impact on their scholarship, is grounded in their expectation that they will be unencumbered in their efforts to advance the public good.

The loosely coupled nature of universities supports free inquiry and reduces the hierarchical nature of the academic organization.

Hirschhorn encouraged leaders to respect the importance of this independence by setting forward strategic themes through a process of engagement. Doing so, faculty are encouraged to engage with leaders to contour the theme into a future direction.

This process gives voice to academics to express concerns about changes that may interfere with their scholarly pursuits and advance alternative approaches that respect their need for a free environment in which to advance the common good through their scholarship. It may be that some resistance to change is not due to concerns about academic freedom; it is the case that faculty involvement will help leaders flesh out legitimate concerns and address them prior to making changes.

The value and complexity of working “at the seams” – Larry Hirschhorn (1994)

encouraged leaders of loosely coupled organizations to identify strategic themes that offer growth opportunities “at the seams” between the organization’s semi-autonomous units. Finding these seams – or boundaries – between units may be difficult. In higher education academic disciplines change as advancements are made, sometimes creating new collaborations that extend the “seams” of the unit and creating new loosely coupled systems. These changes, which sometimes develop organically as stakeholders identify new collaborations. The entrepreneurial of stakeholders within a loosely coupled organization create new systems or units that will become important to those who are engaged in the new work. This complicates efforts at the organizational level to identify changes that will result in growth, because from their vantage point and with the information they have, the leaders may not know of new collaborations and new systems. This makes the involvement of those potentially impacted by proposed changes even more important. They will bring their own experiences in, and knowledge of, the system to the change process and contour the “strategic theme” advanced by the leaders to accommodate new collaborations.

Organizational leaders have positional authority and control over resources and can advance changes with or without the meaningful involvement of key stakeholders. Over time these changes may well be fully implemented even when the changes were made without regard to the guidance offered by Larry Hirschhorn (1994). Leaders should consider whether a directed approach to change is worth the consternation that may result, that may impact future change efforts.

CONCLUSION

Hirschhorn (1994) recommended that leaders of a loosely coupled organization advance changes “at the seams” between the semi-autonomous units of the organization. He advised leaders to advance strategic themes rather than definitive plans and to guide and protect the organization in the process of growing “at the seams” while using inclusive tactics to engage others in the plans (1994 p.3). Hirschhorn encouraged giving local leaders significant authority over how the changes will advance and recommended open and transparent communication. He suggested involvement strategies will help to identify change opportunities that create “specialized parts” and those that combine old parts to create new ones (1994 p.3). Weick noted the importance of communication between the different systems within the loosely coupled organization. (1976 p.3)

Cornell leaders advancing both changes – the creation of Cornell NYC Tech and the establishment of the Cornell College of Business – followed some aspects of Hirschhorn’s advice. Cornell NYC Tech created a new “specialized” campus in New York City and Cornell College of Business combined old parts to create a new college. Both change efforts employed some involvement strategies – the provost relied on advice and guidance from a committee of the Faculty Senate and he and other leaders held open meetings and interviews to discuss the proposal. The president and provost who advanced the Cornell College of Business plan created a faculty governance committee and held multiple open forums and interviews to answer questions.

The location of the new organizations – Cornell NYC Tech in New York City and Cornell College of Business on the main campus in Ithaca – appears to have been a factor in how the change was received. Perhaps the primary difference in how faculty and alumni were engaged in the process is related to the timing and scope of that involvement. University leaders announced their intention to submit a proposal to build the new applied science campus in New York City, they had already engaged local college leaders in the early stage consideration. They soon sought faculty, student and alumni engagement in the process.

Perhaps the most notable difference in how the proposed changes were received had to do with the perceived advantages to the impacted units. Cornell NYC Tech was proposed as a new venture that would strengthen the university's presence in New York City, and with city and state businesses. It was proposed as different, and not in competition with educational activities on the main campus in Ithaca. Leaders went to some length to assure faculty, staff, alumni and others that the new campus would not draw resources away from the main campus, rather it would enhance the university as a whole. Those who communicated about the proposal focused on the net new opportunities the campus would create. Faculty, students, and alumni generally responded in positive ways to this additive quality of the campus. The seven months between the university's announcement of its intention to propose and the submission of the application were spent engaging campus constituencies and building upon the early positive reactions.

Cornell College of Business was proposed as a unification of three schools, two of which had been independent and one that was embedded in another college.

University leaders announced their intention to establish the college 6 weeks before the vote of the Board of Trustees that would formally establish the new college. They did not engage faculty, students, staff or alumni in discussion about the positive aspects of the proposed change, which combined “old parts” to create a new unit. The advantages to students, faculty, and alumni of making the change were articulated by university leaders but the constituencies had little time to consider them before the trustee vote. For alumni and faculty in the previously independent schools, the positive aspects of the change were not immediately apparent. In a loosely coupled organization, losing independence is not generally regarded as a positive change, and the lack of engagement before the vote of the Board of Trustees left some faculty and alumni to question the proposed benefits. The reactions of alumni and faculty had much to do with the process that was used to advance the change. They expressed a desire to consider the proposal and express their views prior to the board vote. The failure to actively engage local leaders and faculty, combined with timing of the board vote, left some to feel that the matter had not been sufficiently studied. Hirschhorn’s warning that a change in one part of the organization might “unpredictably trigger responses out of proportion” in another part of the system because the “linkages among elements are often unpredictable, ill understood and/or uneven” seems relevant in this case. The process that was used to advance this change caused overall concern in parts of the

campus and alumni community because university leaders moved quickly and without active the engagement of local leaders, including the Faculty Senate.

The creation of Cornell NYC Tech was “at the seams” of several existing units. The establishment of the Cornell College of Business was not “at the seams”; it required significant changes to the core of the university and impacted previously independent schools. Both changes were led from the university’s central administration but the Cornell NYC Tech proposal provided many opportunities for key constituencies to engage in the development process. The establishment of the Cornell College of Business provided few opportunities for engagement until after the board had voted to create it. This difference in how and when local leaders and key constituencies were engaged in the change process appears to have had an impact as to how the change was received in the early stages.

The long term impact of the different processes that were used in advancing these changes remains to be seen. However, in the early stages of these changes, it does appear that Hirschhorn’s(1994) advice to leaders of a loosely coupled organization was directionally accurate. The leaders who developed Cornell Tech did so with more attention to the nature of the university and they involved faculty, students, and alumni in the development of the proposed change, which was made “at the seams” between existing colleges. The leaders who established the Cornell College of Business did so with less attention to the expectation of faculty, students, and alumni to be involved in the framing of the change. The change was not “at the seams” of existing units of the

university, rather it changed the seams. The impact of the different leadership approaches to these changes made a difference in how the change was received by important university constituents.

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